

SpaceX's Starlink Public Beta Testing

By Evelyn Arevalo October 03, 2020

SpaceX

SpaceX is looking forward to providing Starlink satellite broadband internet service globally. The company aims to initially offer connection in rural areas of the northern United States and Canada before this year ends. A total of 4,409 internet-beaming satellites will initially make up the Starlink constellation; there are around 708 satellites already in low Earth orbit. SpaceX is Private Beta Testing the network among employees. Starlink users receive broadband service from the satellites in space via a user dish terminal that is easy to install. "The instructions are super-easy. You plug it in, and you point it at the sky, and a few seconds later you have internet. It's truly remarkable," Jonathan Hofeller SpaceX Vice-President of Starlink and Commercial Sales said in July.

SpaceX's Starlink network is also undergoing real world use with Washington state's unit of first responders, who are helping rebuild after wildfires destroyed the small town of Malden in early September. The emergency telecommunications leader of the Washington State Military Department's IT division, Richard Hall, told reporters he set up Starlink user terminals in locations that are severely devastated by the fires, to provide families broadband access that enables them to perform wireless calls and connect online. In his job profession Hall has set up a variety of satellite services, he stated that "there's really no comparison" between Starlink and other networks. "Starlink easily doubles the bandwidth" in comparison, "I've seen lower than 30 millisecond latency consistently," he told *CNBC* news last week. --- "Starlink will be a revolution in connectivity, especially for remote regions or for emergency services when landlines are damaged," the founder of SpaceX Elon Musk said.

Musk also shared that SpaceX will soon begin a Public Beta Testing phase of the Starlink network. He says it will start "Very soon for higher latitudes like Seattle." When asked when Starlink will be available in Brownsville, where SpaceX has its Starship launch facility in South Texas, Musk stated -- "Brownsville is quite far south, so probably 3 months or so for good connectivity — needs several more Starlink launches. I'm using it at the little house I rent in the area. Definitely not good there yet," he wrote via Twitter. The company is asking potential Starlink customers to sign up via **Starlink.com** to receive updates of when the service will be available in their area. Those who sign up may have an opportunity to become a Public Beta Tester of the network.

Last month, SpaceX told the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) that the satellites are currently capable of beaming low-latency broadband internet below 30 milliseconds with download speeds greater than 100 megabits per second. "Average latency will improve as more satellites launch (directly above you more frequently) & more ground stations are deployed. As we're able to put more ground stations on roofs of server centers, legacy Internet latency will be zero," Musk explained on Friday. "... Starlink is designed to enable competitive gaming," he said.

Submitted by AGCS Lloyd "Punk" Corbett, USN RET