

FAQs

Below are some general questions and answers about technology, and some specific questions asked by Sawgrass residents.

Q. What is fiber to the home?

A. Fiber to the home (FTTH) is the delivery of a communications signal over optical fiber from the operator's switching equipment all the way to a home or business, thereby replacing existing copper infrastructure such as telephone wires or coaxial cable. Fiber to the home is a fast-growing method of providing vastly higher bandwidth to consumers and businesses, and thereby enabling more robust video, internet and voice services.

Q. What is optical fiber?

A. Optical fiber is a hair-thin strand of glass, specially designed to trap and transmit light pulses. The fiber uses light instead of electricity to carry a signal. It is unique because it can carry high bandwidth signals over long distances without signal degradation, and it can provide those signals simultaneously in both directions – upload and download. Copper media can also carry high bandwidth, but only for a few hundred yards – after which the signal begins to degrade and bandwidth narrows.

Q. How does running fiber all the way to homes improve telecommunications services?

A. Connecting homes directly to fiber optic cable enables enormous improvements in the bandwidth that can be provided to consumers, both now and for many decades to come. Today's widely commercialized fiber access technology can provide two-way transmission speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second, with 10 gigabit systems now coming to market and even higher bandwidth fiber networks in development. These improvements can be made without having to change the installed fiber, which is why fiber networks are said to be "future proof" and are capable of handling increases in bandwidth demand for decades to come. In addition, all-fiber networks are capable of providing symmetrical bandwidth for downloading and uploading, which gives them another advantage over copper-based networks.

Q. Why are network operators upgrading to FTTH?

A. Ever-accelerating demands for more bandwidth and faster connectivity, driven by increasingly sophisticated video services and other applications, have prompted telecommunications providers to carefully consider which access technologies will enable them to meet their subscribers needs far into the future. Running fiber all the way to homes and businesses has become the best way to stay ahead of

that demand. In addition, many telephone companies are upgrading to FTTH because it gives them the ability to deliver a television service to their subscribers, in addition to the fastest possible Internet service, which enables them to compete with cable television providers. And many municipalities provide FTTH service because they know that world class connectivity is essential to attracting businesses and jobs and enhancing the quality of life for their residents.

FAQs

Q. What trends in telecommunications are driving the need for more bandwidth?

A. The main driver is the proliferation of video over the Internet, particularly via video services such as Netflix, Hulu and YouTube. In its annual Visual Networking Forecast, Cisco estimates that 1.2 million video minutes – the equivalent of 833 days (or over two years) – will travel the Internet every second. In addition, the number of Internet-enabled devices in the average home continues to grow, as consumers purchase more smart-phones, tablets and Internet video devices (such as Roku boxes), as well as machine-to-machine devices – and together these devices are increasing the need for more bandwidth to the home.

Q. But isn't everything going wireless? Why do we need wireline fiber connections in our homes?

A. Wireless mobility is increasingly important to the proliferation of Internet applications and services. But when you look at connectivity from end to end, the vast majority of the signals are carried over wireline (and increasingly) fiber infrastructure, whether it's to a cell tower in the neighborhood, a wi-fi access point in a business or community center, or a wireless router in the home. It is this blend of robust wireless mobility and ultra-high speed wireline connectivity that is driving the development of the "always available" platform that is delivering increasingly sophisticated, high-bandwidth services and applications to both consumers and businesses.

Q. I would like more clarity on whether residents will have the option of Internet only or be forced into an Internet bundled with television package.

A. The Task Force is recommending we pursue an agreement for Internet only. We would only reconsider a bulk deal for a double-play package if the community requested it.

Q. How much administrative fees will be added for the HOA to control?

A. None. Sawgrass Association and the Castle Group will provide the necessary administration as a service to the community.

Q. I do not want to change my email address from comcast.net to another email. This is a very big inconvenience and will need to be done if we move away from Comcast. The people who are telling you something else are lying to you.

A. No, they are not lying. No matter who provides Internet service, you would be able to keep your Comcast email address.

Q. Do any of the providers have data capacity maximums?

A. No. We've confirmed with both providers under consideration that there are no data capacity maximums with bulk Internet agreements.

Q. Would the finalists bring fiber to the residents' homes or just to the street? Would there be a cost to the homeowner beyond the bi-annual fee?

A. We will be negotiating an agreement that requires the vendor to bring fiber into the home. There would be no additional fees.