

ARPA Information Sheet

What is ARPA and how does it benefit me?

ARPA is short for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. It is an economic relief package providing funding to a wide array of projects and programs at the state and local levels supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rock Island has been awarded funding for a large infrastructure project that expands fiber optic access to qualified areas of San Juan County. If you've heard from Rock Island or OPALCO inquiring about your participation in this project, then you have property in one of the areas included in this project. This is great news because it means you can gain access to fiber optic broadband service without paying any construction costs, saving you potentially thousands of dollars.

There are obvious benefits to taking advantage of ARPA:

- All trenching and build cost fully funded: You'll pay nothing for trenching, laying conduit, splicing, or other labor cost associated with running fiber to your home
- Access to high speed internet: When the conduit installation is complete, you'll have access to high speed broadband services
- Increase home value: Homes that have access to high speed internet are more attractive to buyers and renters, especially in our new work-from-home reality

What will be the impact of trenching on my property?

Rock Island has been working closely with local contractors since 2015, and together we've installed 600 miles of fiber optic conduit. Driveways, yards, and streets are returned to their original condition, as each contractor is responsible

for restoration according to the Master Service Agreement they are working under.

For this project, as we have hundreds of connections to accomplish in a finite time period, contractors will be installing conduit at the minimum required depth for telecommunications facilities. This allows for expediency without compromising build quality; the shallower depth also results in even less than normal impact on your property.

Do I have to sign an easement?

Rock Island will not require an easement on your property except in some rare circumstances. If an easement is deemed necessary for your connection, we will discuss that with you directly.

Where on my property will the facilities be installed?

Each connection funded by ARPA is a single fiber line to the primary residence. Our engineer will provide you with a proposed trenching route, most often along existing, known utility paths and pre-disturbed ground.

You will have an opportunity to request changes to the route, but highly customized designs won't be possible. Our engineer's design will be the optimal route in the vast majority of cases, barring unknowns like existing utilities not installed to code or other features of your property that may become obstacles.

How long will this project take?

All ARPA funded facilities (73 miles of conduit) must be in place and ready to deliver broadband service by October 31, 2026.

As facilities get installed, service will become available.

It is critical that project participants cooperate with the necessary timing restraints of project completion.

Notice will be given in advance as to the timing of your individual excavation. When you opt in to participating in ARPA you will be provided with an online portal where updates and information will be made available as the project progresses.

If I opt out now, can I change my mind?

Participation in this project is a one-time opportunity with a clear deadline, meaning that it's imperative to respond in a timely manner if you would like to participate.

If you choose to opt out of this project now and change your mind when the work is underway, some accommodations in scheduling may be possible. However, once an area has been completed and crews have moved on, they will not back track to your location.

Please note that getting fiber optic conduit installed to your home does not require that you take internet service at this time, or ever.