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Clarks, NE Recognized as a Smart Rural Community<sup>SM</sup>

Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company (NNTC) recognized the Village of Clarks, NE as a Smart Rural Community<sup>SM</sup> (SRC) on Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at the VFW in Clarks at the company's open house.

The designation comes from the Rural Broadband Association (NTCA) in conjunction with NNTC. This recognition is presented to those Broadband enabled communities who see an importance of Broadband Internet as a way to connect and grow through the capabilities of expanded online education, remote work, telehealth, ag technology, economic development, government services, safety and security. Clarks, NE is a Gig-Certified capable community enabling technology for all those who live and work there.

The Smart Rural Community<sup>SM</sup> designation is an opportunity for rural communities to position themselves among a national network of communities powered by innovative rural broadband providers for growth. Gig-capable fiber communities have the power to build a brighter future for small-town America.

At a time in Nebraska and the United States when government is investing millions to help close the "Digital Divide", Clarks, NE is already enjoying the same great fiber enabled speeds as those in urban areas like Lincoln and Omaha.

NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield also recognized NNTC for this achievement, noting, "We are so excited to welcome another Smart Rural Community provider into this growing network of innovative broadband providers delivering the Internet's fastest speeds in some of the most remote and rural communities of our country. I applaud NNTC and Clarks, NE for their commitment to enabling cutting-edge technologies that drive innovation and promote economic development in their region and nationwide."

The presentation to Clarks by NNTC was part of a company hosted open house. All NNTC communities will receive this designation at a later date.

About NNTC:

*Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company is a telephone, internet and television service provider headquartered in Jackson, NE. NNTC serves 30 communities throughout 24 counties in northeast Nebraska. Founded in 1955, NNTC is one of Nebraska's first telephone cooperatives providing fiber service to 100% of its customers.*

About NTCA:

*NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association is the premier association representing nearly 850 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America. NTCA members are leading the technological evolution for rural consumers, delivering robust and high-quality services over future-proof networks that make rural communities vibrant places in which to live and do business. Visit NTCA at [www.ntca.org](http://www.ntca.org).*