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## Pembroke isn't ready for upgrade

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GateHouse News Service

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Pembroke — Plans for introducing fiber optic services (FiOS) to cable subscribers in Pembroke are not on the "Verizon" for 2008.

Richard Colon, a spokesman for Verizon, told selectmen Monday night that while a percentage of Pembroke households have already been built in to receive FiOS technology, plans to build in additional households serviced through a wire center in Bryantville will have to wait.

FiOS is a broadband, fiber optic technology that offers Internet, telephone and video services such as DVR and On Demand channels to Verizon customers. Colon said Verizon, which is the only company that offers FiOS technology, has invested \$18 billion in plans to build out FiOS in communities across 16 states through 2010.

Many South Shore communities, including Rockland, Marshfield and Abington, are already equipped with FiOS, while others such as Kingston and Plymouth are targeted to receive the technology this year.

Colon said last year, 2,000 households in Pembroke were built in with FiOS through a wire center in Hanover. Those households receive phone and Internet services, he said. While plans have been discussed to service an additional 4,000 households in Pembroke, Halifax and Hanson through a wire center in Bryantville, plans to do so are not slated for 2008.

While not on the company's immediate list of priorities, Colon stressed that Verizon plans on working closer with the town toward servicing Verizon customers with FiOS at a later date.

"This doesn't mean forever," Colon said. "We know there is a demand here, and we have a significant investment in the community."

Selectman Terry Finnegan said with Comcast as the lone cable and Internet provider servicing Pembroke, she would welcome introducing Verizon to more residents in town.

"We're more than anxious to at least have that other option," Finnegan said.

But some selectmen had issues with being put on hold by the company. Selectman Hilary Wilson said with a portion of residents already built-in with the FiOS technology, Verizon should work to finish what it started.

"You've got this investment in one end of town, so I don't understand why you wouldn't focus completely on one community," he said.

"I'm not saying it won't happen, but it won't be in 2008," Colon said.

Finnegan suggested that the board draft a letter to be sent to Verizon requesting that the Bryantville wire center be built in with FiOS sooner than later.

Colon said plans call for both the Hanover and Bryantville wire centers to expand to provide telephone, Internet and video technology in the future.

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