

Pennsylvania town drops BPL plans

January 28, 2005 -- The Borough of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, has decided against plans to offer broadband Internet service via broadband over power line (BPL) technology, according to a January 18 [report](#) in *Public Opinion*. The Cumberland Valley Amateur Radio Club ([CVARC](#)) spearheaded ham radio [opposition](#) to the plan in the eastern Pennsylvania community of some 17,000 residents through an informational campaign. "We were lucky, but only because many members of the local amateur community put time in to fight BPL right up front, before the municipality had thrown so much money at it that it had a stake in it succeeding," CVARC President David Yoder, KB3HUC, told ARRL. "I can't emphasize that enough--putting people in front of the decision-makers, working with the press and so forth paid off, because we jumped in as soon as we heard BPL was being considered." The *Public Opinion* article by Cathy Mentzer, quoted Chambersburg officials as saying there wasn't enough money in the municipality's Electric Department budget to go forward with a BPL deployment this year. Borough officials also cited state legislation effective last year that encourages telecommunication companies to provide broadband to consumers. While the BPL initiative is off the borough's 2005 projects agenda, *Public Opinion* quoted Borough Council President Bill McLaughlin as saying, "As far as I'm concerned, it's dead." *Public Opinion* also noted that CVARC members were pleased by the outcome. "That is good news," the article quoted Yoder as saying. "All Amateur Radio operators in the area are relieved to learn that apparently our concerns were taken into account, along with the recent legislation." Among other things, CVARC members had told the Borough Council last year that BPL would interfere with Amateur Radio and its ability to provide emergency communication. Chambersburg officials had been looking into leasing the borough's power lines to an Internet service provider as a way to generate revenue, and a consultant had recommended Chambersburg look into BPL.