

WYOMING

POPULATION: 581,075 MILLION
COUNTIES: 23



20% of Wyoming residents only have access to one fixed broadband provider.

Like many states with low population density, many people living in Wyoming persistently lack access to broadband at affordable prices with high speeds, a challenge that the State is addressing by improving its understanding of where broadband is available and at which speeds.

Wyoming offers a [speed test](#) to collect information from residents about broadband access in the state. While just over 2,700 people have taken the speed test, the results are staggering. 737 people who participated in the survey indicated that they do not have a home broadband subscription. Of those respondents, 430 indicated that there was no broadband availability at their location, while 307 indicated that there was broadband available.

These responses tell two stories, one about the number of people who do not have the option to purchase broadband service at their home and another of people who do not have a broadband subscription for some other reason. Affordability is the predominant reason that people may not subscribe to broadband when they could technically access it, with BroadbandNow finding that only [19.6% of residents](#) have access to a wired Internet plan at or below \$60 per month.

The speed test results also tell a story about disproportionate speeds. While the lowest survey participants had no speed capacity, the highest responses were over 900 Mbps, bringing the average download speed to 30 Mbps and the average upload speed to 13 Mbps, suggesting huge disparities between the most connected

households having access to near Gigabit speeds, while many people still lack access to Internet service at any speeds.

FCC data sheds some light on this disparity. Wyoming's [state broadband map](#) is based on Form 477 data from 2017 and includes Counties, Community Anchor Institutions, Microwave Service Towers, and Cellular Coverage Networks. Still, more recent data are available from the FCC. Unlike Wyoming's speed test data, FCC data only shows broadband availability in terms of advertised speeds, which often differ from the actual speeds people experience when they access the service.

In 2020, the FCC evaluated 579,000 Wyoming residents and found that 537,000 (92.7%) had access to a fixed broadband connection at minimum 25/3 Mbps speeds. Rural Wyoming is particularly disconnected. The agency found that only 179,000 of 221,000 residents (81%) had fixed broadband access. In urban areas, the FCC found that 100% of 358,000 residents had access to a fixed broadband connection at minimum speeds.

Because the FCC's data overstates access and Wyoming's speed test only represents a small portion of the state's population, the actual number of people who do not have broadband access remains uncertain. This creates a significant problem as state and federal funding programs base their determinations largely on FCC data, while Microsoft data show that an estimated [356,000](#) people in Wyoming do not use the Internet at broadband speeds.

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The consequences of inaccurate data include ineligibility from grant programs. For example, in October, the United States Department of Agriculture [awarded Union Telephone company](#) \$252,000 in ReConnect grant money to deploy a fixed wireless network, but that funding is intended only for use in areas the FCC deems unserved, lacking any fixed broadband access above 10 Mbps download speed and 1 Mbps upload, or underserved, areas that have access to Internet at speeds between 10 and 25 Mbps download and between 1 and 3 Mbps upload.

Additional Resources:

- [New Map Hopes To Provide More Minute Data On Broadband Coverage](#)
- [Wyoming Internet providers see huge surge in Internet use, interest in broadband](#)
- [Wyoming State Broadband Program Administered by the Wyoming Business Council](#)
- [Wyoming Legislative Service Office's Broadband Access in Wyoming Report](#)