

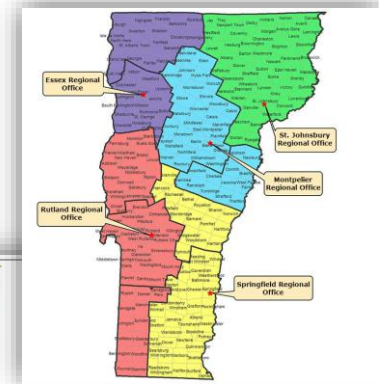
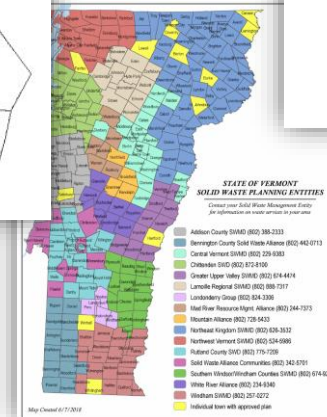
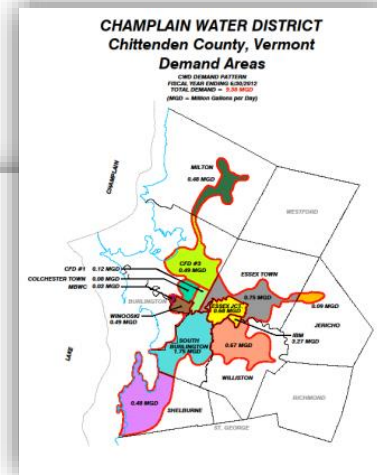
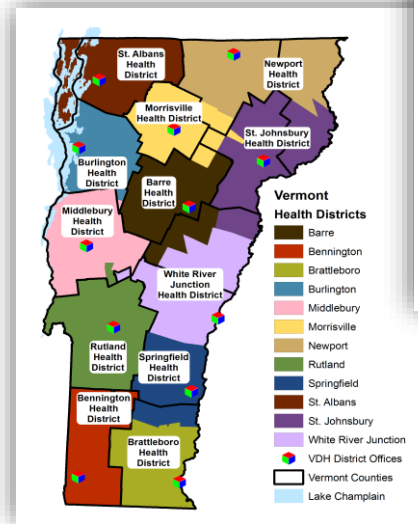
Communications Union Districts

Two or more towns and cities may elect to form a communications union district for the delivery of communications services and the operation of a communications plant.

- Organized under [Title 30: Public Service, Chapter 82: Communications Union Districts \(2015\)](#)

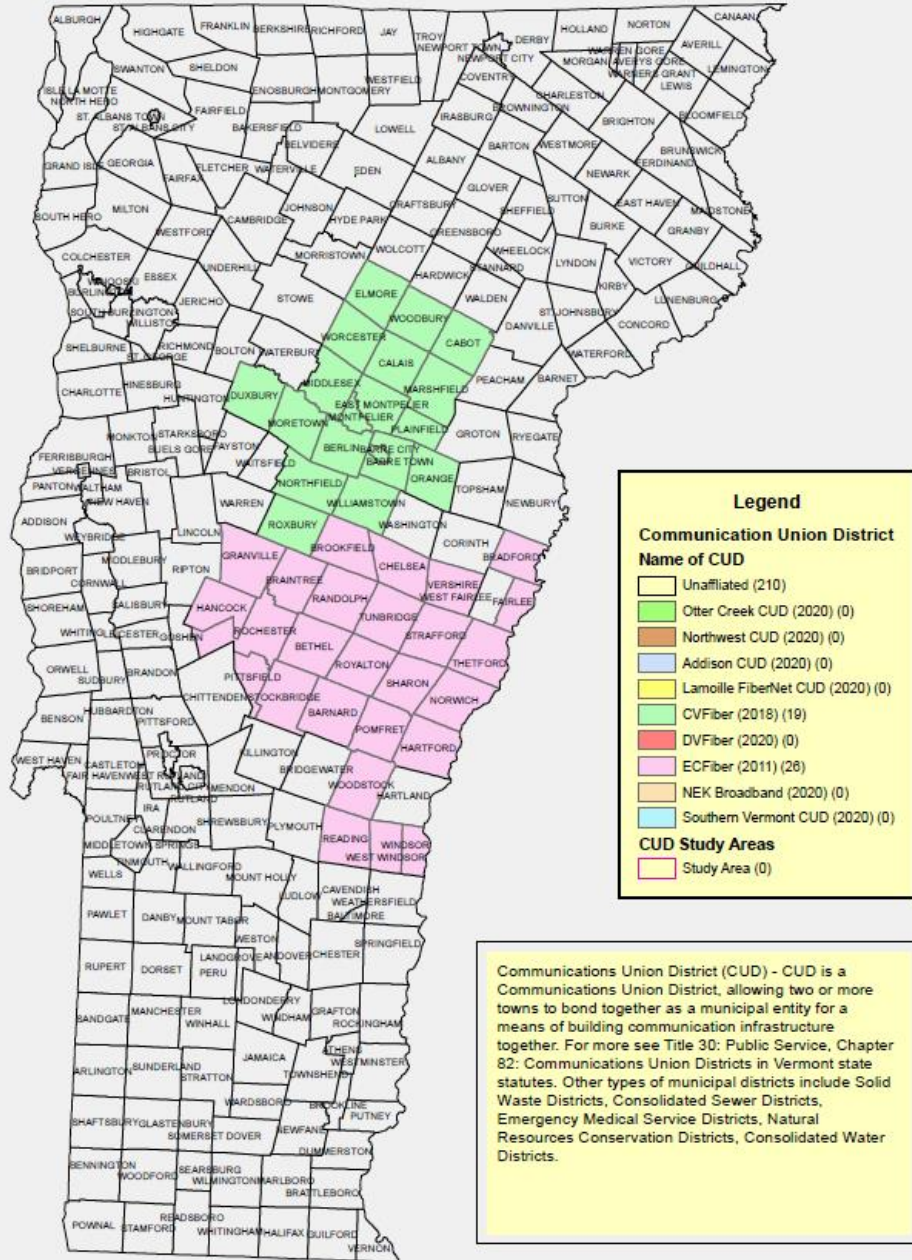
Other types of Municipal Districts:

- Solid Waste Districts*
- Consolidated Sewer Districts*
- Emergency Medical Service Districts*
- Natural Resources Conservation Districts*
- Consolidated Water Districts*



Communications Union Districts:

- **Aggregate Demand** – Mixing dense and less dense towns makes the project more attractive to providers/ AND MORE NEGOTIATING POWER.
- **Entire region can benefit** – If carriers pick off one town leads → digital divide.
- **Funders are familiar with Municipal Districts**
- **Efficiency** - Network design, construction, and operation can all be more efficient when planned from the onset.
- **Town boundaries are irrelevant** – Roads, topography, and settlement patterns are more important.
- **Risk Mitigation** – Individual towns are not on the hook
- **Additional Funding Opportunities** – Easier access to federal state grants and loans that require providing services to those least served.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel** – Share resources, lessons



Growth of CUDs

EC Fiber

- 2008 - East Central Vermont Fiber (ECFiber) formed
- 2011 - secured \$1M in insider startup financing in 2011 and built a 20-mile pilot project.
- 2015 – Raised a total of \$7 million in \$2,500 increments on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis from 500 investors.
- 2016 – Became the East Central VT Telecommunications District. Vermont’s first Communications Union District
- 2016 – ECFiber accesses the Revenue Bond Market

CV Fiber

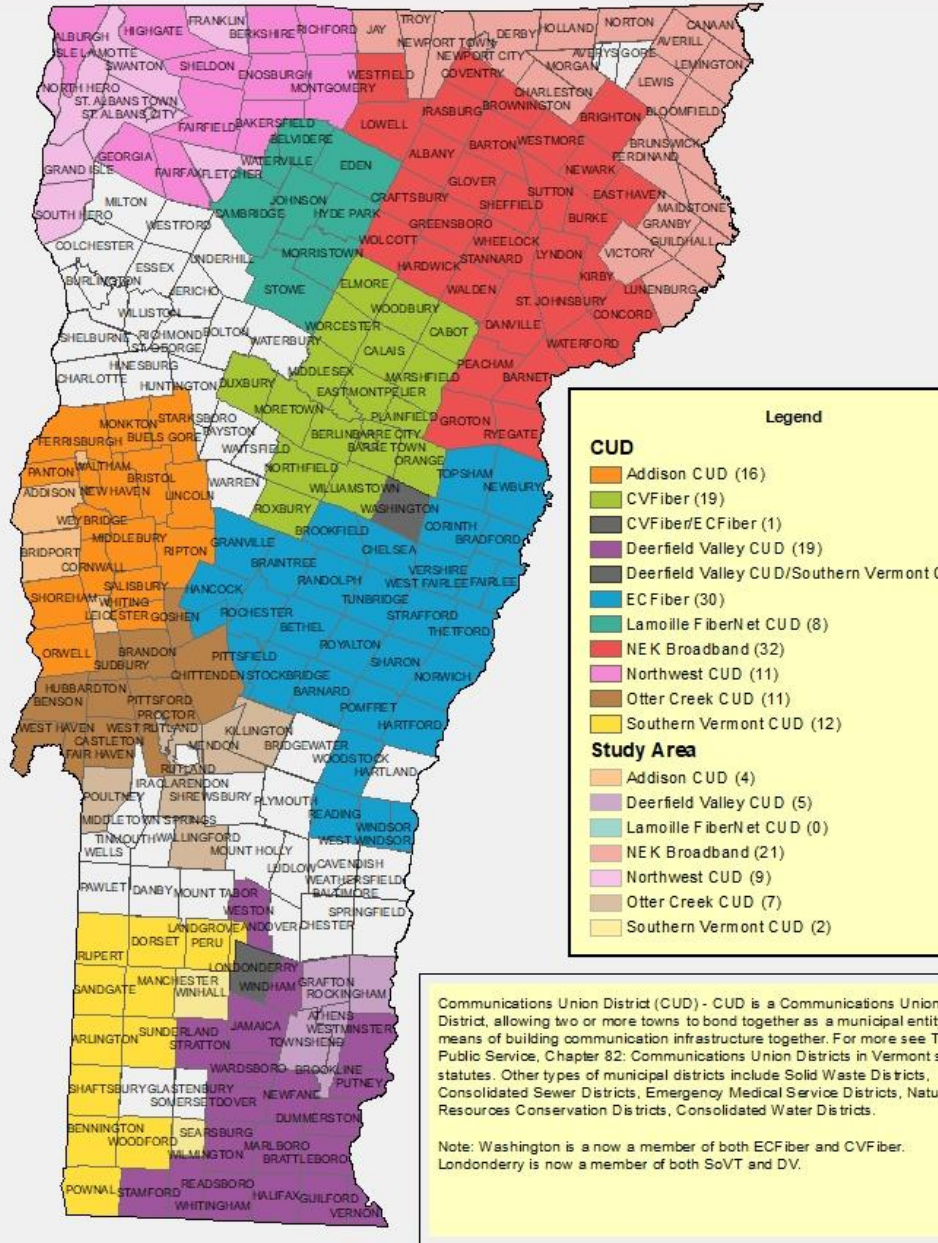
- 2018 – CV Fiber formed at town meeting

Growth of CUDs

Winter 2021

- 9 Districts
- 160 Member Towns
- 58 Towns in Study Areas
- 160 Volunteer Board Reps

CURRENT CHALLENGE: Adapting the ECFiber Model to current realities and doing it in 1/10 the time

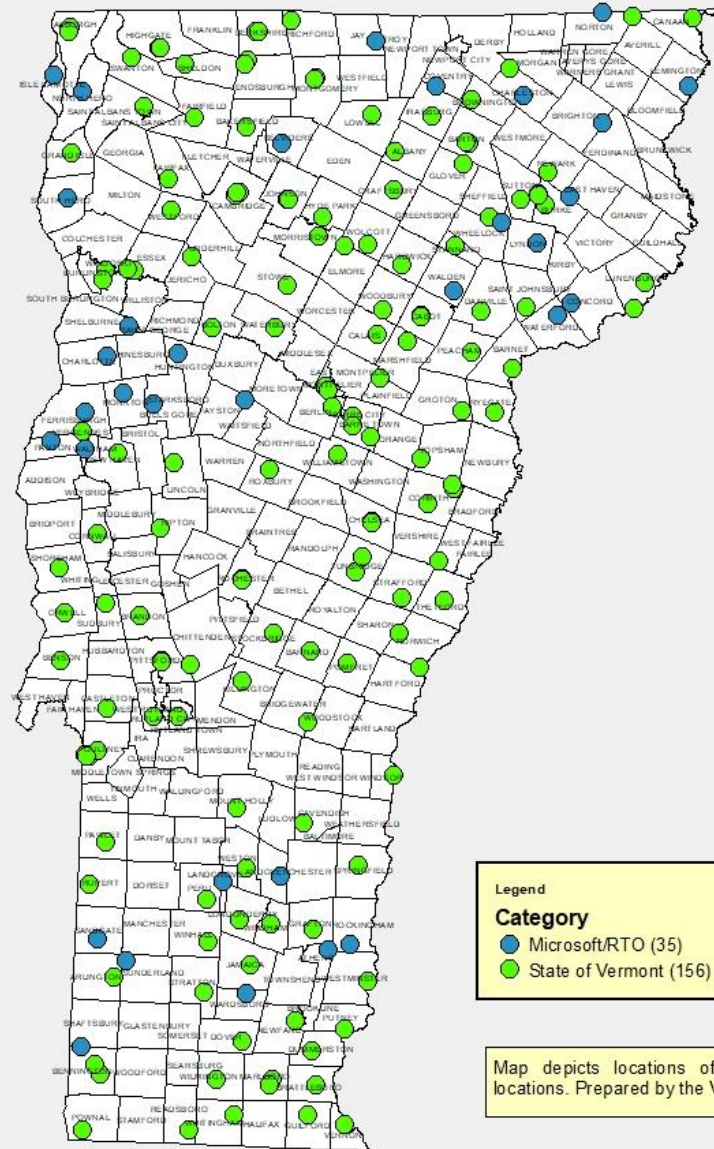


CUDs During COVID

VOLUNTEERS

- **Data Gathering**
- **Information dissemination**
- **Wi Fi Hot Spots and Mi Fi Personal Hot Spots**
- **Building relationships with schools and libraries**
- **Creating a clearinghouse/case management platform for their district**
- **Covering the costs of drops to expand coverage.**





Wi-Fi Hot Spot Project

- 191 Sites installed
- Are there existing quality Wi-Fi hotspots in the community?
- Does the school district have a large number of households without broadband access?
- Is the location in a town center without cell service? The devices allow Wi-Fi calling.
- Is there a special-use case, such as a shelter or the community gathering space for a high-risk population?
- Variety of available Wi-Fi sites. Schools may not be available for public access when in session.
- Request a Wi-Fi Hot Spot from the Information Technology Disaster Resource Center (ITDRC)

<https://www.itdrc.org/covid-19/projectconnect>