

# ***News Release***

## **Attawapiskat Resources Inc. Launches New Cell Phone Service for Remote James Bay Area Community**

**Attawapiskat First Nation, Ontario, April 10, 2012** - Attawapiskat First Nation members have welcomed the launch of community-owned cell phone service. Completion of this milestone is the result of a very successful partnership by Attawapiskat Resources Inc. (ARI), and Keewaytinook Okimakanak's Kuhkenah Network (KO-KNET) which, in turn, partnered with Dryden Municipal Telephone System (DMTS)/Dryden Mobility.

The new, ARI-owned cell phone service connections to the Western James Bay Telecom Network fibre optic cable have replaced the community's previous satellite connection and now deliver improved, higher speed service. This also gives Attawapiskat the base 2G GSM technology that can be upgraded in the future. As part of the overall project, ARI included installation of a redline antenna for the First Nation, and invested in the research, project management, and implementation costs.

Steve Hookimaw, Chairperson of ARI, said, “Community members will certainly benefit from improved safety and quality-of-life. But it is important to realize that this development will also improve Attawapiskat’s commercial infrastructure, allowing for more residents and visitors to conduct business here.”

“Most Canadians don’t even think twice about being able to use their cell phones,” said Attawapiskat First Nation Chief, Theresa Spence. “For us, this is a real achievement. I commend the hard work of Attawapiskat Resources Inc. and its partners for getting this service up and running.”

Collaboration with partners was a critical factor in the success of this initiative. KO-KNET and DMTS were instrumental in confirming technical requirements, perfecting systems and working with ARI on implementation, testing and launch phases. The venture also received financial support from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (Emerging Technologies Program) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Rural Economic Development Program).

“This initiative will contribute to rural and northern prosperity by supporting job creation, expanding educational opportunities and helping to build strong and safe communities,” said Minister Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines, and Chair of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation.

With 2,700 members, the Attawapiskat First Nation is located at the mouth of the Attawapiskat River and James Bay, in Northern Ontario. Approximately 1,800 live on-reserve.

Attawapiskat Resources Inc., works to secure joint ventures and other arrangements that diversify the First Nation's economic and employment base through community-owned businesses. Examples already include businesses supporting the DeBeers Canada Victor Mine site, including a wholly-owned catering company (Attawapiskat Catering LP), and a number of joint ventures in explosives and blasting services, helicopter transportation, steel fabrication, and mechanical warranty work on heavy equipment. In addition, ARI has recently taken ownership of a Timmins-based security company.

Today's announcement is another example of how ARI is delivering on its mandate to improve opportunities for community members.

- 30 -

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**Note: *Backgrounder follows***



## Backgrounder

[Attawapiskat Resources Inc.](#) (ARI) is wholly-owned by the Attawapiskat First Nation and was created to take advantage of the business opportunities negotiated in the Attawapiskat-De Beers Canada Impact Benefit Agreement for the Victor Mine in Northern Ontario. ARI represents the public business and economic capacity interests of the Attawapiskat First Nation and its members through the establishment, governance and operation of competitive businesses capable of securing and implementing business opportunities related to the Victor Mine and other ventures.

ARI has successfully worked with industry partners to create a number of community-owned enterprises that generate important revenue and provide jobs and training opportunities for its members. ARI invests in the future of the First Nation through financial contributions in these ventures, as well as to the Community Trust and donations for individual requirements.

[Keewaytinook Okimakanak's Kuhkenah Network](#) (KO-KNET) was established in 1994 by the Chiefs of the Keewaytinook Okimakanak First Nations. KO-KNET works in partnership with First Nations and other Aboriginal communities across Canada, along with the public and the private sectors, to develop and sustain a carrier class Wide Area Broadband Network.

The network supports the development of broadband connections and applications that combine video, voice, mobile and data services requiring broadband connectivity solutions. The KO-KNET team works with partner First Nations to develop locally owned, controlled and managed network services and applications to support First Nation leaders, administrators and program staff in the use of their information communications technology equipment and programs. Various scalable community broadband applications in the areas of health, education, cell service, data warehousing, portals, IP video conferencing and telephony, IP cellular services, community and regionally based networks are in operation today and can be viewed on-line at <http://knet.ca>.

Keewaytinook Okimakanak is a not-for-profit, publicly funded, tribal council organization working with six remote First Nations to deliver second level support services and community capacity building.

[Dryden Municipal Telephone System \(DMTS\) / Dryden Mobility](#) Dryden Municipal Telephone System (DMTS) is a municipally run telephone company in Dryden, Ontario, Canada, and has been serving the area for 90+ years. DMTS offers local, residential, and business land line service to the City of Dryden. In addition, DMTS offers long distance service to the City and surrounding area. DMTS also operates mobile GSM phone services throughout Northwestern Ontario.

For more information regarding DMTS and its services please call: 807-223-1100 or toll free 888-223-9818. DMTS can also be found online at [www.dmts.biz](http://www.dmts.biz). DMTS; It's for you!

### **Additional Information on Project Benefits**

There are three key areas of benefit for Attawapiskat First Nation members:

#### **Improved Safety and Quality-of-Life**

The primary objective for this project was to create a network and make cell phones available, supported by reliable service. As a result, ARI has created much more security and safety for residents, whether in Attawapiskat itself or out on the land, as well as for visitors, temporary workers and tourists in the area. Up to now, with no cell phone network at all, people involved in accidents or other emergencies often had no way to call for assistance.

Overall quality-of-life and enjoyment will be enhanced through improved reliability and faster download speeds at the most affordable rates possible. This will lead to better communication, use of expanded information sources and greater access to entertainment offerings and other pastimes.

#### **Educational Opportunities**

Distance education options via video and audio will be more widely available, as a result of the community's having its own service connections. Training related to such initiatives, as well as individual community members' increased use of cell phone technology, on-line programming, and other tools will increase the overall knowledge base of the First Nation.

#### **Business Expansion and Employment**

This improvement in communications infrastructure removes one of the barriers for businesses to locate on-reserve. With fast, reliable internet and significant bandwidth capacity available, business can be conducted more efficiently within the community, the region and beyond, creating potential for added employment and income.

In other remote communities where cell phone use is common, people benefit from the immediacy of this communication and its widespread spin-offs. This is also the goal for Attawapiskat First Nation where, with half the population under 25 years of age, many residents will be ready to adapt to technology and how to use it to access employment and generate revenues.