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**NEW PARADIGM RESOURCES GROUP SEES UTILITIES AS RISING  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS POWER**

**Existing Last-Mile Access Creates Huge Opportunity for Utilities Venturing into  
Telecom, Says Inaugural “Utilities in Telecom Report”**

**CHICAGO, JANUARY 29, 2001** – In addition to powering homes and businesses, more and more utility companies are capitalizing on their existing “last mile” infrastructure to provide customers advanced telecommunications services, according to New Paradigm Resources Group’s *Utilities in Telecom Report*<sup>TM</sup>.

The inaugural report, released today, highlights an emerging competitive communications sector that promises customers additional service choices.

“Telecom is a natural opportunity for utility companies,” said Terry Barnich, NPRG President. “While last-mile connectivity is the Achilles heel in most telecom networks, the last mile is the utilities’ stock in trade. It makes sense for the utilities already enjoying this last-mile access to participate in the market, and it’s surprising to see how few utilities are taking advantage of this situation – but don’t count on utilities staying sidelined very long.”

According to NPRG, utilities have come a long way in the telecom industry, with their best days still ahead of them. The telecom business is not new to utility companies – some have been supplying fiber capacity for long-haul transport for years. Thanks to new technologies and groundbreaking legislation, local and regional utilities are successfully branching out into the growing local telecom market. These utilities have often partnered with local exchange carriers who have either expertise serving vertical markets, or an attractive customer base easily tapped by the infrastructure of the utilities.

The first edition of the *Utilities in Telecom Report*<sup>TM</sup> provides extensive coverage of utilities offering telecom services, including corporate structure, services, strategy, and network specifics, with special attention to the nascent bandwidth trading industry. The report features a full rundown of players, business strategies and industry forecasts, and also discusses the history of utilities in telecom.

“Utilities are primed to take off in the telecom business, because they understand the importance of interconnecting networks and the wisdom of staying within their areas of expertise,” said Craig Clausen, NPRG Senior Vice President. “We expect utilities to become significant players in the telecom market, expanding from the long-haul markets into the local space, where their infrastructure advantage is very competitive. This is an exciting market, and we’re pleased to track it.”

The 270-page report is available from NPRG for \$2,950 by calling (312) 980-4796, or through <http://ecom.nprg.com>

New Paradigm Resources Group, based in Chicago, is a research and consulting firm serving the investment community, equipment vendors and competitive carriers on a variety of issues ranging from due diligence review to business planning and market assessment, as well as project development. NPRG publishes *CLEC Report*<sup>™</sup>, a biannual multi-volume review of the state, trends and future of the competitive local telecom industry, as well as the *ISP Report*<sup>™</sup>, *ASP Report*<sup>™</sup> and *BLEC Report*<sup>™</sup>. For more information, call 312-980-4796 or visit NPRG on the Web at <http://www.nprg.com>