



Did you know that it takes an entire day to splice together two network backbone fiber cables at a single ICN fiber splice point? Within each of the 17.8 mm diameter armored cables that will be put into the ground are 144 individual strands of fiber, separated into twelve buffer tubes that hold twelve fiber glass strands, each one a different color. Each color has to be carefully fusion spliced together.

This process takes place in a trailer of sorts. This “trailer” is an impeccably clean environment with the temperature and humidity closely controlled to prevent any corruption of the fiber while performing the tedious “splicing”. The engineers who perform the splicing are dressed in a manner that maintains an expected level of cleanliness and protects them from the fiber, as well. All this helps the splicing engineer, but it’s imperative for the fiber in order to obtain a good splice that will last. The fiber strands are coiled through a tray that keeps them separated and easily identifiable for future access.

Once all the splicing is complete, the splice case is sealed using an adhesive gasket. The case is then air-pressure tested to insure that the gasket seal was installed correctly to prevent dust and water from affecting the exposed glass. The sealed case is placed inside a polymer/concrete box or handhole that sits in the ground. These handholes can be buried or planted with the top flush to the soil surface. The handhole protects the splice case from the environment and allows for easy access in the future.

Come visit with ICN staff at the Illinois Computing Educators (ICE) Conference, 2/27 through 3/1, at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois.

E-rate Information

We have added an E-rate Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to our website. Current E-rate information, as well as the FAQs can be found by [clicking here](#).

Please contact your local RTC office if you have questions.



Meet our Staff - Behind the Scenes with IBOP

Two employees integral to the physical construction nuts and bolts of the IBOP project are **Jerry Pickett** and **Steve Creasey**.

Getting fiber to the Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) is only part of the project. The fiber needs to get into the building and all the way to the equipment room in order to be useful. Steve Creasey and Jerry Pickett work to design and engineer the ‘inside plant’ portion of the fiber builds. This means determining the best way to enter the property, where to enter the building (also known as coring), and how to get to the equipment room in a way that’s expedient, inexpensive and most importantly, up to code.

Jerry brings forty-one years cabling experience to the project. His first twenty-four years were spent with GTE/Verizon and the rest with the State of Illinois. **Steve** brings twenty-eight years of inside wiring experience to the IBOP Project. Steve learned much of his skills as a Racal-Datacom/Milgo technician and has brought those skills with him to the State of Illinois. These gentlemen know what they are doing and our project is in good hands with them on site!