

# In the Matter of Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) causing harmful interference to radio communications in Briarcliff Manor

March 5, 2007

Before the Westchester County Board of Legislators Committee on Public Safety  
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I am an FCC-licensed Extra Class Amateur Radio operator and an active volunteer in providing emergency communications in Westchester County, NY where I serve as the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) Radio Officer, appointed by the Commissioner, County of Westchester Department of Emergency Services; and Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Emergency Coordinator appointed by the Section Manager, ARRL Eastern New York Section<sup>2</sup>. I am also a member of the Westchester Emergency Communications Association (WECA)<sup>3</sup>.

I volunteer with approximately 100 fellow Amateurs and Westchester citizens to serve our neighbors, the County government, and non-governmental organizations such as the American Red Cross in Westchester. If you are interested in seeing first hand how your Westchester neighbors communicate by Amateur Radio, I encourage you to attend our annual WECA Field Day at Harbor Island Park in Mamaroneck the afternoon of Saturday June 23rd overnight through the morning of Sunday June 24th.

I am also Senior Director, Network Infrastructure for Columbia University Information Technology where I am responsible for managing broadband Internet services for approximately 40,000 students, faculty and staff in their classrooms, offices, residence halls and University-owned apartments surrounding the University's New York City campus and have a good appreciation of and interest in making sure broadband Internet access is made available to all the citizens of Westchester.

I live and travel in the vicinity of what began as an Ambient Corporation BPL field trial performed in conjunction with Consolidated Edison<sup>4</sup> and experienced harmful interference to my two-way radio communications from this system for which I filed multiple formal written interference complaints beginning March 31, 2004 with Con Edison, Ambient Corporation and the FCC. While Ambient and the FCC did respond directly to my complaints, Con Edison has never directly communicated with me. This interference went largely unresolved for all of 2004 at which point I lost interest in pursuing it further as the ARRL was on the case and I have limited personal time available to spend making no progress with Con Edison.

I am greatly concerned that, if left uncorrected and allowed to expand throughout the County, the Con Edison BPL system as implemented in Briarcliff Manor will cause harmful interference that will prevent emergency as well as routine Amateur Radio communications. The failure of the utility to respond in a timely manner to my harmful interference complaints makes it clear that, should an emergency occur requiring Amateur Radio communications, we can expect that Con Edison will not be able to act quickly to ameliorate interference, putting Westchester residents' lives and property in jeopardy.

My colleague Ed Hare of the ARRL will provide you with further information on the nature of BPL, how some BPL technologies can cause interference to radio communications while others don't, and information on the history of the specific BPL interference issues caused by the Con Edison BPL system in Briarcliff Manor.

Thanks for your time and interest.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.columbia.edu/~alan/bpl>

<sup>2</sup>ARRL is the national association for radio amateurs

<sup>3</sup><http://www.weca.org>

<sup>4</sup>FCC Experimental License WD2XEQ (File No. 0050-EX-ML-2003)