

I strongly urge you, as you consider Broadband over Power Lines (BPL), to be mindful that such a scheme will likely have an extremely deleterious effect on other communications services, particularly those that use the high frequency radio spectrum.

Power lines are not “closed systems” and by their very nature present the possibility of interference to radio users; attempting to utilize them for broadband communications, while technically feasible, runs counter to power lines’ intended uses and, in my experience, would violate good engineering practices.

As an Extra-class Amateur Radio licensee (K5IQ), a professional broadcast engineer, and as a former Communications Officer with the Louisiana Wing, Civil Air Patrol, I have extensive experience with radio communications and RF-related subjects. Raising the RF noise floor, particularly on the high frequency bands, would render useless much of the invaluable service provided by Amateur Radio particularly in times of distress and in support of Homeland Defense. Even the simple act of listening to the radio could be endangered by BPL interference. Could unlicensed interference become an impediment to free speech?

Further, while many power companies are responsive to day-to-day interference complaints, your own Enforcement Bureau records will show that a great many are not. If BPL generates significant revenue for these power companies, how likely will they be to respond to interference complaints from (or about) radio users? Will BPL end-users be satisfied when legally licensed and properly engineered radio stations inadvertently interfere with their “open system” Internet service? My experience of more than 30 years has shown me that most consumer electronics users don’t care whether or not an interfering station is operating legally, they just want the “offender” to go away.

Please protect the licensed users of the publicly owned radio spectrum by not allowing interference from unlicensed sources to predominate. NO, please, to the promotion and expansion of BPL.

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