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## Results and Updates from *Vermont Poll 2010*

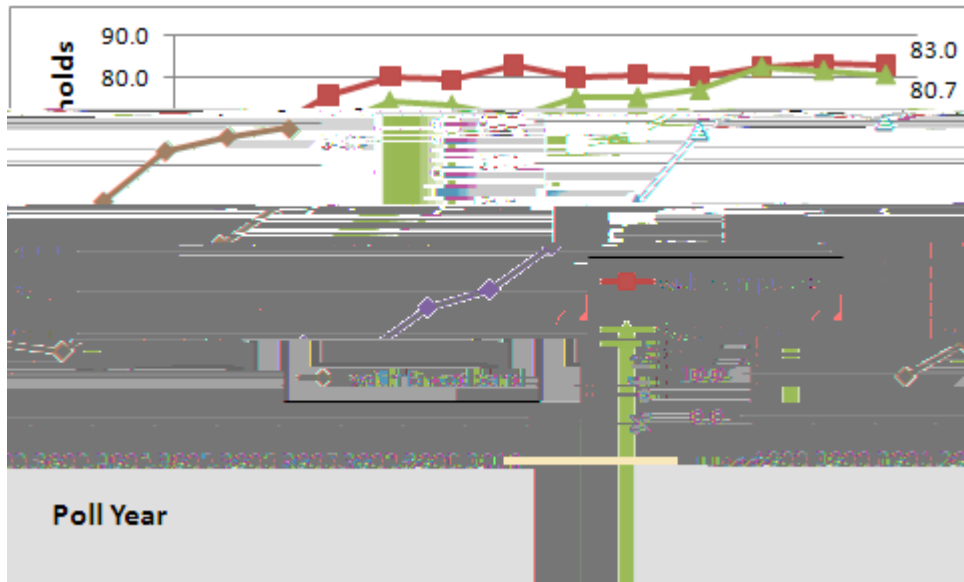
### Household Internet Connectivity

high-speed connections are rising, but broadband is not available to all households, and digital divides remain.

### Computer Ownership and Internet Connectivity

For more than a decade, the *Vermont Poll* has collected data on computer ownership and Internet connectivity among Vermont households. The percentage of households with computers has held steady just above 80% for several years (see Figure 1). Household Internet connectivity has risen to nearly match computer ownership (80.7% in 2010). Broadband or high-speed Internet connections have been on the rise in recent years, reaching 68.9% in 2010. Overall 85.5% of Vermont households connected to the Internet have broadband in 2010.

Figure 1. Vermont households by computer ownership, Internet connections, and broadband connections, 1999-2010.



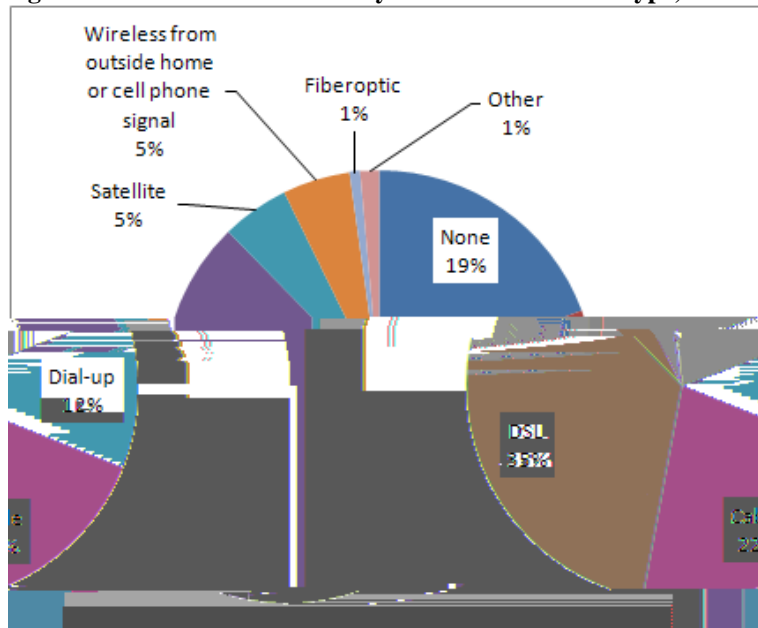
$N_{2010\text{computer}} = 659$ ,  $N_{2010\text{Internet/broadband}} = 631$

Source: University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies, *Vermont Poll*, 1999-2010.

## Internet Connection Types

Vermont households were asked what type of Internet connection they had (see Figure 2). Other than those households that had no Internet at all (19%), the plurality had DSL (35%), followed by cable (22%) and dial-up (12%).

**Figure 2. Vermont households by Internet connection type, 2010.**



N = 631

Source: University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies, *Vermont Poll, 2010*.

## Determining Broadband Connectivity

This report uses the terms broadband and high-speed Internet interchangeably. The US Federal Communications Commission defines broadband as an Internet connection with an upstream and/or downstream data transmission speed of 768 kilobits per second. However it is very difficult, if not impossible, for survey respondents to find and report their true Internet connection speed. Therefore the *Vermont Poll* and many other surveys on Internet connectivity determine broadband connectivity by Internet connection type. For the 2010 *Vermont Poll*, a household was determined to have broadband if their Internet connection was via DSL, cable, satellite, outside wireless or cell phone Internet or fiber optic. In reality any individual connection of one of these types could possibly supply speeds below the true FCC speed definition.



However, there does not seem to be a statistically significant income-based difference between



have at least one wireless cellular phone, but no landline telephone.<sup>1</sup> As a state, Vermont has the lowest level of “wireless-only” households in the country. Only Vermont residents over the age of eighteen were interviewed. The poll included questions on a variety of issues related to public policy in the state of Vermont. There were 661 respondents to the 2010 Vermont Poll. The results based on a group of this size have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent at a confidence interval of 95 percent.

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## About CRS

The Center for Rural Studies is a nonprofit, fee-for-service research organization that addresses the social, economic, and resource-based challenges faced by rural people and communities. Founded in the University of Vermont's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 1978, CRS supports the research and teaching missions of the university through its work in applied research, program evaluation, consulting, and outreach. Currently CRS is involved in the ARRA-funded Vermont Broadband Mapping Initiative with the Vermont Center for Geographic Information, the Vermont Department of Public Service and other partners. The goal of this initiative is to map and verify the availability of high-speed Internet in Vermont.

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<sup>1</sup> Blumberg et al. (2009). Wireless Substitution: State-level Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January – December 2007. *National Health Statistics Report*, 14.



## Appendix:

### *Vermont Poll 2010*

#### Questions on Computers and Internet Connectivity

Is there a personal computer or laptop in your home?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know
4. Refused

What type of Internet connection do you have at home?

1. None
2. Dial up modem (using phone lines)
3. Cable Modem
4. DSL (also using phone lines, faster than dial-up)
5. Satellite Internet service
6. Wireless or cellphone internet coming in from outside your home
7. Fiberoptic
8. Other (specify)
9. Don't know
10. Refused

You may have heard of the term broadband, which is another name for a high-speed Internet connection. Broadband or high-speed Internet are defined as anything faster than a dial-up telephone Internet connection.

At this point in time, is any high-speed Internet service available to your home, if you wanted to be connected?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know
4. Refused

