

08. February 2010  
Nicholas Neu  
PI-10-01  
☎ +49 561 301-3301  
📠 +49 561 301-1321  
press@wingas.de

## High-speed surfing with OPAL

### ***Parallel to the new natural gas pipeline in the east of Germany, WINGAS is laying fiber optic cables for high-performance Internet connections***

**Kassel.** Around five million people in Germany, mostly in rural regions, are still cut off from high-speed Internet services. With the construction of the OPAL (*Ostsee-Pipeline-Anbindungs-Leitung* – Baltic Sea Pipeline Link), the WINGAS Group is contributing to the German Federal Government's "Broadband Program," with which three quarters of all German households are to be provided with a fast Internet connection by 2014. Along OPAL's natural gas pipeline route, which runs for around 470 kilometers from Lubmin, through Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg and Saxony, to beyond the Czech border, new fiber optic cables are now also being laid directly beside the pipeline. Particularly for many smaller municipalities in Germany's eastern states, this represents the first opportunity to connect to the new, fast data highways.

"Part of the fiber optic cabling is used to control the pipeline and the flow of natural gas," explains Dr. Gerhard König, Managing Director of WINGAS. "But we can offer a large part of our available capacity to the telecommunication industry for their DSL services, thus enabling a faster link to the worldwide data networks for rural regions." Fiber optic cables form the basis of high-speed fiber optic cable networks, which are used for rapid data transfer. The company's fiber optic cable infrastructure provides numerous links to local, regional and international network operators.

The WINGAS Group's existing natural gas pipeline system, which is over 2,000 kilometers long, already has a comprehensive fiber optic infrastructure used by telecommunication companies. By using WINGAS' fiber optic cable network, these companies can also provide their customers with high-performance DSL connections. The first VDSL (Very-High-Speed DSL) projects, which enable transfer rates of up to 50 megabits per second, are being planned. In the future, it will also be possible for the regions along the OPAL pipeline in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg and Saxony to be connected to the WINGAS fiber optic cable network. "We are already in talks with a number of communities, about connection to our fiber optic cable network," explains WINGAS'

Managing Director. “Collectively, the cables laid alongside the gas pipelines comprise several bundles, each with 12 glass fibers. We can offer the free capacities accordingly.” In comparison to data transfer via copper cables or wireless communication, the bandwidth of fiber optic cables, which are made of very fine quartz glass, is extremely broad – even though the fibers have a diameter of just 0.125 millimeters. Today, fiber optic cables can transfer data volumes of up to 10 terabits per second. This means that far more than ten million telephone conversations can be carried simultaneously by a pair of glass fibers no thicker than a hair, or that the data volume of a daily newspaper which is published every day for 300 years can be sent within a single second.

Together with the German networks of two European partner companies (KPN of the Netherlands and TeliaSonera Carrier of Sweden), the fiber optic cable network marketed by WINGAS in Germany extends over more than 10,000 kilometers, thus forming a backbone for the German IT and telecommunication industry. The network directly connects important locations in Germany’s key economic regions. There are network hubs (POPs) in places such as Hamburg, Berlin, Hanover, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich and Dresden. In the largest cities, WINGAS has a multiple presence with its fiber optic cable capacities. They are connected by means of network mergers with regional telecommunication companies. There are also connections to the international fiber optic cable network in other European countries.

*European energy provider **WINGAS GmbH & Co. KG** is active in natural gas trading and distribution in Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Austria, the Czech Republic and Denmark. Its customers include municipal utilities, regional gas suppliers, industrial firms and power plants. Since 1990 WINGAS has invested more than 3 billion Euros in the development of a natural gas transport and storage infrastructure. WINGAS TRANSPORT pipeline network, which is over 2,000 kilometers long, connects the major gas reserves in Siberia and in the North Sea to the growing markets in Western Europe. In Rehden in North Germany, WINGAS has the largest natural gas storage facility in Western Europe – with a working gas volume of over four billion cubic meters, and the company also participates in Central Europe’s second largest storage facility in Haidach, Austria. Additional natural gas storage facilities are currently being built in Great Britain and Germany in order to secure the supply of natural gas in Europe.*

*WINGAS used cutting-edge glass fiber technology to develop its pipeline grid right from the outset. Initially, data transmission focused on controlling and monitoring the pipeline system but with the liberalization in the telecommunications markets, in 1996 WINGAS was one of the first companies to begin marketing its fiber optic network. Today WINGAS has many well-known companies in the telecommunication and IT industries among its customers.*

More information at: **[www.wingas.de](http://www.wingas.de)**