



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Chicago Park District

Jessica Maxey-Faulkner

312.742.4786

jessica.maxey-faulkner@chicagoparkdistrict.com

**MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT ANNOUNCE EXPANSION
OF FREE WI-FI AT CHICAGO BEACHES**

*Beaches at 31st Street, 57th Street now offer free Wi-Fi; Seven beaches along Lake Michigan
now offer free wireless service to beachgoers*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Chicago Park District and Everywhere Wireless today announced that two more Chicago beaches will now offer free Wi-Fi to visitors. Free Wi-Fi is now active and available at 31st Street Beach and 57th Street Beach; in total, seven Chicago beaches now offer beachgoers free Wi-Fi.

“Technological innovations and investments lead to vibrant communities in which residents and visitors are able to stay connected to their families and their work – even while enjoying a day at one of Chicago’s beautiful beaches,” said Mayor Emanuel. “Offering Wi-Fi in more public places throughout the city enables Chicago to be one of the most connected cities in the world.”

The design and cost of the free Wi-Fi at 31st Street Beach and 57th Street Beach is provided by Everywhere Wireless, the same company that has provided high-speed Wi-Fi to five other Chicago Beaches since 2013. The Chicago Park District is providing power, electrical work and infrastructure. Cisco equipment was utilized at both new locations.

“As a company that serves Chicago exclusively, it’s a pleasure and an honor to be a part of the city’s developing Internet infrastructure,” said Keegan Bonebrake, EVP of Strategy and Real Estate at Everywhere Wireless. EW owns and manages a Gigabit Internet network that provides Internet to thousands of customers in apartments and condominiums city-wide, as well as to businesses.

Through a series of public-private partnerships, free wireless is now available at 31st Street, 57th Street, North Avenue, Osterman/Hollywood, Montrose, Foster, and Rainbow beaches as part of a program with Everywhere Wireless and Cisco; Garfield Park and the South Shore Cultural Center through a partnership with Google; and has continued to partner with SilverIP Communications to provide wireless service at Millennium Park since 2012.

“The Chicago Park District constantly strives for new ways to enhance the patron experience at our parks and facilities,” said Michael P. Kelly, Superintendent and CEO of the Chicago Park District. “We are pleased to add this new amenity at 31st and 57th street beaches.”

The Everywhere Wireless partnership is part of the Mayor’s Broadband Challenge, launched in September 2012, which seeks to create a gigabit-speed fiber network in targeted commercial and industrial corridors, establish free wireless service in parks and public spaces, and increase accessibility and affordability of internet service in underserved areas across the city. To support these efforts, the city is leveraging assets, including existing city-owned fiber; right-of way access to freight tunnels and sewers; coordination with planned city construction work to modernize water and sewer infrastructure; and other forms of investment.

For more information, visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312-742-PLAY.

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The Chicago Park District is the 2014 Gold Medal Award winner, recognized for excellence in park and recreation management across the nation. For more information about the Chicago Park District’s more than 8,300 acres of parkland, 585 parks, 26 miles of lakefront, 12 museums, two world-class conservatories, 16 historic lagoons, 10 bird and wildlife gardens, thousands of special events, sports and entertaining programs, please visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or contact the Chicago Park District at 312/742.PLAY or 312/747.2001 (TTY). Want to share your talent? Volunteer in the parks by calling, 312/742.PLAY.