Hungry field mice knock out phone network

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STOCKHOLM, Sweden (Reuters) -- Hungry field mice caused a 20-hour telephone blackout in central Sweden on Tuesday by gnawing through cables, telecom operator TeliaSonera said.

Fixed-line phone connections for more than 1,500 homes in Jamtland and Medelpad in central Sweden, were severed late on Monday by hungry rodents chewing their way through a fibre-optic cable near the town of Ange.

Mobile phones were also cut off.

"This is not at all common," said Hans Borjesson, a technician at TeliaSoneria.

Thousands of homes in Sweden have already been without phones and electricity for weeks as the result of a heavy storm in early January that killed seven people.