

For more information, contact:
Dan Elliott - 406-444-6187
Will Rosquist - 406-444-6359

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MPC TO PRESENT ELECTRIC TRANSITION PLAN TO PSC JULY 1

Representatives of the Montana Power Company will make an informal presentation of the company's electric transition plan before the Public Service Commission on Tuesday, July 1, at 1:30 p.m., at the PSC's Bollinger Room, 1701 Prospect Avenue in Helena.

Senate Bill 390, passed by the 1997 Legislature, established a framework for Montana's monopoly electric utility industry to become competitive in the generation and sale of electricity.

The law sets a transition schedule for Montanans to choose electricity suppliers and requires regulated utilities to file transition plans with the PSC one year before the date any of their customers are entitled to choose a supplier. Because MPC and PacifiCorp have large industrial customers in Montana entitled to choice under the new law by July 1, 1998, both companies must file their transition plans for the PSC's consideration on or before July 1, 1997.

A transition plan must contain an outline for an orderly transition to choice for all customers, a request for recovery of transition costs, a method for assigning customers that do not chose suppliers, an educational program for their customers and a plan for implementing universal system benefits programs.

Once a plan is filed, the PSC must hold a contested case proceeding and afford interested parties the opportunity for a hearing before issuing a final order either approving, modifying or denying the plan.

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