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PSC SEEKS COMMENTS ON PACIFIC POWER'S PROPOSAL
TO CHANGE ITS ELECTRIC LINE EXTENSION POLICIES

Customers of Pacific Power and Light Co. have until April 24 to submit written comments or requests for hearing to the state Public Service Commission on the company's proposal to revise its electric line extension policies.

Under the existing line extension policy, Pacific Power extends an electric line to a new location and provides the service drop, meter and transformer free of charge if the location is within 300 feet of existing facilities. The customer must pay the company's costs to extend service over 300 feet.

If the PSC approves the company's new line extension proposal, the free extension allowance will be based on a dollar amount rather than distance. Under the new plan, the line extension allowance for a residential customer will be \$600, with the meter, transformer and service drop included in the job cost. The person requesting the line extension will pay any line extension costs that exceed \$600. For new nonresidential locations, the line extension allowance will equal the applicant's estimated annual revenue. The applicant will have to pay any costs to extend service that exceed that amount.

Other changes proposed by Pacific Power include:

An increase from 3 years to 5 years in the period of time during which customers who paid for their line extensions are entitled to receive refunds from new customers who hook up to the same line.

A provision that customers may waive their right to refunds on a line extension advance and receive a \$250 credit in return from the company.

A requirement that the cost of relocating existing facilities at a customer's request must be paid entirely by the customer. Under the existing policy, the company is responsible for half the cost.

According to Pacific Power, the proposed new line extension policy is necessary to prepare for competition in the electric industry. The company's proposal is similar to the electric line extension policy already in place for Montana Power Company. Persons requesting a line extension from MPC get a \$500 extension allowance, plus the service drop, transformer and meter.

Comments or requests for hearing on this proposal must be received by April 24 by the Public Service Commission, PO Box 202601, Helena MT 59620-2601. The Montana Consumer Counsel (406-444-2771) is available to represent residential and small commercial consumers' interests in this matter.

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