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PSC WANTS IDEAS FOR SPENDING \$141,000
FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

The state Public Service Commission is looking for suggestions by April 24 on how to spend approximately \$141,000 that has been paid into a service quality penalty account by US West Communications.

The money in the account accumulated as a result of US West's failures to meet certain service quality targets in accordance with the agreement between the company and the PSC that settled the PSC's 1994 service quality lawsuit against the company. US West met most of the service objectives required by the agreement's service improvement plan, which ended March 31.

According to the terms of the settlement agreement, it is up to the PSC to direct the use of the money in the penalty account, as long as it is used to enhance telecommunications in US West's service territory in Montana.

The PSC wants the proceeds of the fund to benefit low-income or otherwise needy Montanans who have telecommunications needs that are not being met. The money will be used to fund proposals on a short-term or one-time basis in a manner that does not require continued PSC administration or oversight.

Persons or organizations with ideas to propose for use of the fund should send their suggestions in writing no later than April 24 to Kate Whitney, PSC, PO Box 202601, Helena MT 59620-2601. Proposals should identify the telecommunications needs that would be addressed, describe how the money would be disbursed, and specify the amount of the administrative fee, if any. The PSC will review all suggestions and determine which ones merit further consideration.

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