



Montana Public Service Commission
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**PSC TO HOLD HEARINGS SEPT. 2 IN HOT SPRINGS, RONAN & PABLO
ON EXPANDED LOCAL CALLING PROPOSAL BY RONAN TELEPHONE CO. AND
HOT SPRINGS
TELEPHONE CO.**

The state Public Service Commission will hold public hearings in three Montana communities on September 2 to obtain comments on the proposals of Ronan Telephone Company and Hot Springs Telephone Company for extended area telephone service among and between Ronan Telephone's and Hot Springs Telephone's exchanges and Qwest's Missoula local calling region, including that region's proposed expansion to incorporate Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative's exchanges. Extended area service expands local calling areas so that customers' phone calls within an EAS area are local, not long-distance. However, local phone rates in an EAS area must increase to recover EAS costs.

The public hearings will be on Thursday, September 2, at the following locations and times:

- **Hot Springs**, 10a.m., Senior Citizen Center, 101 Main Street;
- **Pablo**, 2 p.m., CS/KT Tribal Complex, Highway 93; and
- **Ronan**, 4 p.m., Community Center, 300 3rd Avenue NW.

If the EAS proposal is approved, Ronan Telephone will increase its customers' rates by \$10.25 per month and Hot Springs Telephone will increase its rates by \$10.50 per month. Information on rate changes for other services will be available at the public hearings, including that optional, lower cost, measured-rate EAS calling plans may be available. In addition, if the EAS proposal is approved, Qwest will increase its statewide monthly EAS increment of \$2.44 by 4 cents, and Blackfoot, which has an EAS application of its own pending at the PSC, will increase its rates by \$1.80 per month.

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