



Montana Public Service Commission  
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**PSC TO HOLD HEARING SEPT. 8 IN HELENA ON REQUESTS TO DELAY  
IMPLEMENTATION OF WIRELINE-TO-WIRELESS NUMBER PORTABILITY**

The state Public Service Commission will hold a hearing September 8 in Helena concerning the requests of nearly all the small local telephone companies in Montana for suspension of the federal requirement that they implement wireline to wireless local number portability.

The hearing will begin at 9 a.m., Wednesday, Sept. 8, in the PSC's Bollinger Room, 1701 Prospect Avenue. If the hearing is not completed in one day, it will be continued to Thursday, Sept. 9, at 1 p.m.

Wireline to wireless number portability allows wireline customers to switch to wireless phones without changing numbers. The Federal Communications Commission ordered that all local telephone companies must have number portability in place by May 24, 2004. However, the FCC also said local companies with fewer than 2 percent of the nation's subscriber lines could petition their state commissions for a suspension of the number portability requirement. A state commission may grant a suspension of the requirement if the commission determines the requirement to implement number portability will result in a significant adverse economic impact on telecommunications users, or is economically burdensome or is technically infeasible, and if a suspension is in the public interest.

Two statewide telephone associations, the Montana Telecommunications Association and the Montana Independent Telecommunications Systems, submitted separate petitions to the PSC for suspension on behalf of their members, which include: 3 Rivers Communications, Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative, Frontier, Lincoln Telephone Co., Range Telephone Cooperative, Southern Montana Telephone Co., Northern Telephone Cooperative, Triangle Telephone Cooperative, Central Montana Communications, InterBel Telephone Cooperative, Nemont Telephone Cooperative and Project Telephone Co. Hot Springs Telephone Co. and Ronan Telephone Co. also submitted a separate petition for suspension.

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