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March 15, 2005

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PSC ASKS MONTANA RAILROADS FOR THEIR PLANS FOR MITIGATING FIRE DANGER ALONG RAIL TRACKS

The state Public Service Commission has asked the railroad companies operating in Montana to submit their specific plans for mitigating fire danger along railroad tracks.

Citing the state's drought conditions and a state law that requires railroads to control fire hazards along their rights-of-way, the PSC requested information regarding the railroads' removal of combustible materials from the railroad right-of-way, employee training and procedures for fire situations and any other plans each railroad company may have to comply with the Montana law concerning control of fire hazards along the railroad right-of-way.

The railroads are required to keep their railroad tracks and either side of the tracks for a reasonable distance within its right-of-way free from dead grass, weeds, or any dangerous or combustible material. A railroad company that fails to comply is liable for any damages that result from fire emanating from trains, track maintenance, or other railroad operations.

The PSC sent the information request to Montana Rail Link, Central Montana Rail, Inc., Dakota Missouri Valley and Western, Rarus Railway Company, Union Pacific Railroad Company, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation.

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