

September 24, 2010

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Public Service Commission Evaluating Proposed CenturyLink and Qwest Merger

Changes could be coming soon to CenturyLink and Qwest customers and the Public Service Commission (PSC) is meeting Thursday in Helena to gather information on the topic from customers and the companies. The Louisiana-based CenturyLink is planning to acquire Qwest Corporation but needs approval from the PSC to do so. The September 30 meeting begins at 7:00 pm at the PSC office, 1701 Prospect Avenue. Representatives from both companies will be at the meeting to discuss the merger plan, and the public will have the opportunity to comment.

"This meeting is a perfect opportunity for the public to let us know how they feel about phone service in the Helena area," PSC Chair Greg Jergeson said. "Every one of Qwest's 217,000 Montana customers, and CenturyLink's 50,000 Montana customers, will be affected by this PSC vote; public input is essential to our reaching a sound decision."

The meeting can be viewed live via the Internet at <http://psc.mt.gov/eDocs/> and will also be archived at the same location. Those wishing to submit electronic comments can do so at <http://psc.mt.gov/Consumers/comments/>. Hard copy remarks can be sent to the Commission at PO Box 202601; Helena, MT 59620-2601. Detailed information related to the proposal can be found under Docket D2010.5.55 on the PSC website, <http://psc.mt.gov/eDocs/eDocuments/>. The PSC is holding a contested case hearing on the issue November 22-23, and anticipates making a decision by the end of the calendar year.

Made up of 5 elected commissioners, the PSC works to ensure that Montanans receive safe and reliable service from regulated public utilities while paying reasonable rates. Utilities regulated by the PSC generally include private investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, water, and sewer companies. In addition, the PSC regulates certain motor carriers, and oversees natural gas pipeline safety and intrastate railroad safety.

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