

PSC Seeks Input on NorthWestern Energy Billing Practices

HELENA, Mont. – The Montana Public Service Commission is seeking public input ahead of a planned meeting with NorthWestern Energy to improve billing practices for ratepayers.

Commissioners Roger Koopman (R-Bozeman) and Tony O’Donnell (R-Billings) will meet with representatives from NorthWestern, along with PSC staff, Monday in Butte to discuss prior challenges related to customer billing and proposed improvements to increase transparency for ratepayers.

Among the topics to be discussed are:

- Current practices related to estimated billing;
- Improved coordination with the PSC to better inform ratepayers of unusual billing events;
- And potential changes to the layout and format of bills to provide additional clarity for the ratepayer.

The meeting is part of an ongoing inquiry by the PSC into the billing policies and practices of NorthWestern following a high volume of complaints related to estimated bills from December and January.

Members of the public with past experiences or concerns related to NorthWestern billing procedures are encouraged to contact Commissioner Roger Koopman (Rkoopman@mt.gov) or Commissioner Tony O’Donnell (Anthony.ODonnell@mt.gov). Concerns can also be directed to the PSC Consumer Assistance Staff (1800-646-6150).

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Made up of five 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.