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**PSC GIVES FAST-TRACK APPROVAL TO QWEST'S PROPOSAL  
TO PROVIDE TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE TO FIRE EVACUEES**

Qwest telephone customers in the Canyon Ferry, Boulder, Corvallis and Darby areas who were evacuated from their homes or businesses due to the recent and ongoing fires in Montana will not be required to pay for certain local phone services they might need because of the fires.

Qwest proposed the program to assist fire victims in its service territory and the state Public Service Commission approved it last week on an expedited basis.

Through October 25, Qwest will waive the charge for transferring service to a new address or, alternatively, for installing new phone service for customers who are displaced from their homes or businesses due to fires. Evacuees may subscribe to voice messaging or call forwarding at no charge. Local agencies that set up shelters to house fire victims will not be charged for the local phone service to the shelters. For customers whose homes or businesses were damaged by fire, Qwest will provide and connect one termination to a phone jack at no charge. Customers who subscribed to Qwest's optional wire maintenance plan prior to the fire may have Qwest repair any fire-damaged inside wiring at no additional charge.

Evacuees whose local phone service is provided by Qwest must call Qwest at 1-877-388-6170 to take advantage of the program. Additional Qwest service areas may be added to the program as fire conditions warrant.

"We gladly expedited Qwest's request for a waiver of some telephone charges for customers that have been evacuated from their homes due to recent forest fires," PSC Chairman Dave Fisher said. "Montana citizens are facing the worst fire season in decades and I am pleased the Commission acted quickly to provide some relief to Qwest customers affected by these fires."

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