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Changes from 2002 to 2003

The total number of complaints from 2002 to 2003 dropped 442, a 16.8% reduction. A few notable statistics follow.

1. Qwest, an ILEC, complaints dropped 344, a 37% decline.
2. McLeodUSA, a CLEC, complaints dropped to 10 from 31.
3. Montana-Dakota Utilities complaints increased from 72 to 109.
4. AT&T complaints increased from 227 to 258.

Complaint Percentages by Company

- Qwest - 26.6% .15% (percentage of complaints compared to total MT customers) (est.)
- NorthWestern Energy - 15.6% .099% (percentage of complaints compared to total MT customers)
- AT&T - 11.8% .21% (percentage of complaints compared to total MT customers)
- Other IXC - 7.4%
- MCI WorldCom - 6.9%
- MDU - 5.0% .14% (percentage of complaints compared to total MT customers)
- Buyers United - 4.8%
- Touch America - 3.8%
- Century Tel - 3.2%
- New Access - 2.9%
- OSP, Inmate - 2.4%
- Other Non-Telco - 2.4%
- Sprint - 1.5%
- Mercury - 1.3%
- VarTec - 1.2%
- Other ILECs - .7%
- Energy West - .7% .06% (percentage of complaints compared to total MT customers)
- Qwest LD - .6%
- McLeodUSA - .5%
- Other CLECs - .4%
- Water Utilities - .3%
Year 2003 Consumer Complaints By Utility - Total # Informal Complaints - 2,188

Northwestern Energy, 341
Energy West MT, 15
MDU, 109
Water utilities, 7
Other CLECs, 9
New Access, 64
McLeodUSA, 10
Century Tel, 70
Other ILECs, 15
Other IXCs, 160
Buyers United, 104
Qwest LD, 14
Sprint, 33
VarTec, 26
MCI Worldcom, 151
AT&T, 258
Touch America, 85
OSP, Inmate, 54
Mercury, 28
Other Non-Telco, 54

2002's Total was 2,630
2003 Complaints by PSC District

District 3
526 (24%)

District 2
474 (22%)

District 4
510 (23%)

District 5
458 (21%)

District 1
220 (10%)
Calls to PSC toll-free complaints number and level of monthly utility consumer complaints 2001-2002-2003

*A consumer call or letter is not logged as a complaint unless PSC staff must contact the utility in order to resolve it.
Qwest Corporation
2003 Complaints
581 Total

- Business office: 191
- Billing/rates: 166
- Access to call center: 81
- Repair/outages: 65
- Delay in connection: 29
- Service termination: 19
- Quality of service: 10
- Payment arrangement: 8
- Unauthorized switch: 6
- Deposits: 2
- Directory listings: 2
- Unauthorized charges: 1
- Cost of construction: 1

Cost of construction
Century Tel of Montana
2003 Complaints
70 Total

- Business office: 33
- Billing/rates: 21
- Delay in connection: 6
- Directories (Telephone): 4
- Termination: 3
- Access to Call Center: 1
- Cost of Construction: 1
- Repair/outages: 1

Total complaints: 70
Other Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs)  
2003 Complaints  
15 Total
New Access Communications
2003 Complaints
64 Total

- Business Office: 26
- Billing/Rates: 18
- Unauthorized Switch: 14
- Termination: 3
- Access to call center: 2
- Directories (Telephone): 1
McLeodUSA
2003 Complaints
10 Total

- Billing/rates: 6
- Quality of Service: 1
- Business office: 1
- Repair/outages: 1
- Delay in connection: 1
Other Competitive 
Local Exchange Carriers 
(CLECs) 
9 Total

BG Enterprises 3
MCI WorldCom 2
Emergent Communications 2
VarTeC 1
Comm South 1
MCI WorldCom Communications 2003 Complaints 151 Total

- Billing/rates: 73
- Business office: 35
- Unauthorized switch: 25
- Access to call center: 6
- Pay-per-call dispute: 5
- Unauthorized charges: 4
- Payment Arrangements: 1
- Quality of Service: 1
- Repair/outages: 1

0 25 50 75 100 125 150
Buyers United, Inc.
2003 Complaints
104 Total

- Billing/rates: 55 complaints
- Unauthorized Switch: 20 complaints
- Business office: 19 complaints
- Access to call center: 7 complaints
- Unauthorized Charges: 2 complaints
- Quality of Service: 1 complaint
Touch America
2003 Complaints
85 Total

- Billing/rates: 46
- Business office: 26
- Unauthorized switch: 6
- Access to call center: 6
- Repair/Outages: 1

Total: 85
Sprint
2003 Complaints
33 Total

- Billing/rates: 17
- Unauthorized switch: 10
- Business office: 4
- Unauthorized Charges: 1
- Pay-Per-Call Dispute: 1
VarTec
2003 Complaints
26 Total

Billing/rates: 16
Access to call center: 3
Unauthorized Charges: 2
Business office: 2
Pay-Per-Call Dispute: 1
Repair/Outages: 1
Quality of Service: 1
Qwest Long Distance
2003 Complaints
14 Total

- Billing/rates: 5
- Business office: 5
- Deposits: 1
- Quality of Service: 1
- Unauthorized switch: 1
- Access to call center: 1
Other Interexchange Carriers (IXCs)
2003 Complaints
160 Total
Operator Services
Providers & Inmate Calling Providers
2003 Complaints
54 Total

- Billing/rates: 34
- Unauthorized charges: 18
- Business Office: 2
Non-Telco, Telco-Billed
2003 Complaints
82 Total

- Mercury Internet Service: 28 complaints
- SBA Online: 8 complaints
- Venus Voicemail: 8 complaints
- Websites: 5 complaints
- America Online: 4 complaints
- Microsoft Online Services: 3 complaints
- B2B Advantage: 3 complaints
- Liberty Online Services: 3 complaints
- Net Page Now: 3 complaints
- Superior Business Network: 3 complaints
- iLab: 3 complaints
- Yellow Page: 2 complaints
- Voice Mail Services: 2 complaints
- United Voice Mail: 2 complaints
- AmeriLinc, Inc.: 2 complaints
- YPD: 1 complaint
- Local Biz USA: 1 complaint
- Call Wave: 1 complaint
NorthWestern Energy
2003 Complaints
341 Total

- Payment arrangement: 116
- Billing/rates: 63
- Business office: 49
- Meters: 40
- Service termination: 26
- Repair/ouages: 22
- Deposits: 10
- Cost of construction: 7
- Access to call center: 4
- Delay in connection: 3
- Quality of Service: 1
Montana-Dakota Utilities
2003 Complaints
109 Total

- Payment arrangement: 30
- Business office: 30
- Billing/rates: 28
- Meters: 9
- Service termination: 8
- Unauthorized Charges: 1
- Delay in Connection: 1
- Deposits: 1
- Quality of Service: 1
Energy West
2003 Complaints
15 Total

- Business Office: 6
- Payment Arrangement: 4
- Service Termination: 4
- Billing/rates: 1

Total: 15
Water Utilities
2003 Complaints
7 Total

Mountain Water: 3
Columbia Heights: 2
Wilder Resorts: 1
Flathead Utility: 1