

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of)	DOCKET UT-080468
)	
QWEST CORPORATION,)	ORDER 01
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	
for Exemption from WAC 480-120-161)	ORDER GRANTING PARTIAL
Relating to Form of Bills)	EXEMPTION FROM RULE
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On March 12, 2008, Qwest Corporation filed a petition requesting exemption from WAC 480-120-161 (4)(b)-(e) and WAC 480-120-161 (5)(a)-(b).
- 2 WAC 480-120-161 requires telecommunications companies to provide a telephone bill in a prescribed form. Subsections (4) and (5) require that telephone bills be clearly organized, comply with certain specific requirements, and individually describe billed charges for toll calls, services, and FCC charges.
- 3 Qwest stated that it wishes to offer its customers the option of receiving a “summary bill” that would reduce the volume and complexity of information included in the standard bill.
- 4 Qwest’s request is distinguished from the electronic bill option allowed under subsection (3) of the rule. The “summary bill” option described by the company will consist of a printed summary bill and online detail; whereas the company’s compliant current offering of an electronic-only bill provides no printed bill at all for electing customers.
- 5 Qwest’s request is similar to a request made by United Telephone Company of the Northwest, d/b/a Embarq in Docket UT-071158, which was granted subject to conditions on October 11, 2007.
- 6 The staff of the Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) reviewed the request and recommended granting Qwest’s request for exemption.

7 Qwest customers are currently subject to a \$5 charge for copies of paper bills older than six months. For Qwest customers who opt for the summary bill program, the company will allow a one-time waiver of this charge. Customers also have free access to their full bill detail on-line for up to 12 months of previous billing at Qwest's website.

8 Qwest will provide a report to staff six months after implementing the summary bill program, and another six months later. The reports will include the number of customers in each month eligible for, enrolled in and opting out of the summary bill offering. The Commission's Staff will track the number of complaints to the Commission regarding the summary bill offering. Staff will analyze the reports and evaluate the need to extend the reporting period.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

9 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the state of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate the rates, rules, regulations, practices, accounts, securities, transfers of property and affiliated interests of public service companies, including telecommunications companies. *RCW 80.01.040, RCW 80.04, RCW 80.08, RCW 80.12, RCW 80.16 and RCW 80.36.*

10 (2) Qwest is engaged in the business of providing telecommunications services within the state of Washington and is a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction under RCW 80.36.

11 (3) Qwest is subject to WAC 480-120-161, which requires telecommunications companies to provide a telephone bill in a prescribed form.

12 (4) Under WAC 480-120-015, the Commission may grant an exemption from the provisions of any rule in WAC 480-120, if consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation and applicable statutes.

13 (5) After reviewing the petition filed in Docket UT-080468 by Qwest on March 12, 2008, and giving due consideration, the Commission finds that the exemption is reasonable and should be granted, on the condition that Qwest complies with the reporting arrangement negotiated with Staff.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 (1) After the effective date of this Order, Qwest is granted an exemption from WAC 480-120-161 (4)(b)-(e) and WAC 480-120-161 (5)(a)-(b), insofar as these rule subsections apply to customers voluntarily requesting a summary bill, on the condition that the company:
- provide semiannual reports of monthly data for a period of one year detailing the number of customers eligible for, enrolled in and opting out of the summary bill offering;
 - allow summary bill customers a one-time waiver of the duplicate bill charge; and
 - not charge customers to enroll in or withdraw from the summary bill program.
- 15 (2) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and Qwest to effectuate the provisions of this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective June 26, 2008.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK H. SIDRAN, Chairman

PATRICK J. OSHIE, Commissioner

PHILIP B. JONES, Commissioner