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November 30, 2004

Ms. Carole J. Washburn, Executive Secretary
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

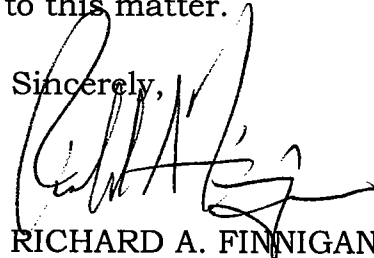
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STATE OF WASH.
UTIL. AND TRNSP.
COMMISSION

Re: Ellensburg Telephone Company - Petition for Limited Exemption
from WAC 480-120-172(4)(b) and (c) and WAC 480-120-172(7)

Dear Ms. Washburn:

Enclosed you will find the original and nineteen copies of the above-referenced Petition. The purpose of this Petition is to seek a limited exemption from certain requirements of WAC 480-128-172(4)(b) and (c) and WAC 480-120-172(7). Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



RICHARD A. FINNIGAN

RAF/km
Enclosures

cc: Connie Meier (via e-mail)
Pat Morse (via e-mail)
Jana Manterola (via e-mail)
Ed Cushing (via e-mail)

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STATE OF WASH.
UTIL. AND TRANSP.
COMMISSION

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of

ELLENSBURG TELEPHONE COMPANY,

Petitioner,

Seeking Exemption from WAC 480-120-
172(4)(b) and (c) and WAC 480-120-172(7)
Relating to Information on Disconnection

DOCKET NO. _____

PETITION FOR LIMITED EXEMPTION FROM
WAC 480-120-172(4)(b) AND (c) AND WAC
480-120-172(7)

1. Ellensburg Telephone Company ("Ellensburg"), by and through its undersigned counsel of record, hereby petitions the Commission for a limited exemption from WAC 480-120-172(4)(b) and (c) and WAC 480-120-172(7). The limited exemption sought by Ellensburg is for the handling of historical amounts owed by customers on the date of cutover to Ellensburg's new billing system.

BACKGROUND

2. Under WAC 480-120-015(1), the Commission may grant an exemption from the provisions of any rule in Chapter 480-120 WAC if doing so is consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation and applicable statutes.
3. During its billing system conversion process, the Commission has been very generous in granting Ellensburg two limited waivers. See, Docket No. UT-031028, Order No. 1, Order

PETITION FOR LIMITED EXEMPTION FROM
WAIVER - 1

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1 Granting Limited and Temporary Exemption from Rules, dated June 27, 2003. See, also,
2 Docket No. UT-041406, Order No. 1, Order Granting Limited and Temporary Exemption
3 from Rule, dated September 22, 2004. Ellensburg appreciates the Commission's
4 understanding of the difficulties Ellensburg has faced in converting to a new billing system.

5 4. Ellensburg is pleased to report that it anticipates conversion to its new billing platform in
6 January of 2005 with the first bill rendered in February, 2005. The billing system
7 conversion will allow Ellensburg to conform to the Commission's rules relating to
8 describing basic charges and non-basic charges and different disconnection patterns for the
9 two categories of charges on a forward-going basis. However, given the way that customer
10 payments have been tracked on an historical basis in the legacy billing system, there is a
11 problem in identifying the historical amounts that may be owed on the date of conversion.

12 5. In other words, Ellensburg will not be able to track for disconnection purposes the difference
13 between basic and non-basic amounts that may exist as of the date of the conversion.
14 Ellensburg will be able to track the distinction on a forward-going basis on the date of
15 conversion.

16 6. In order to accommodate this tracking problem in a way that is fair to customers, Ellensburg
17 proposes the following:

- 18 1. All amounts owed as of the final bill on the legacy system will be classified as
19 "non-basic."
- 20 2. Customers WILL NOT BE DISCONNECTED from basic service for failure to
21 pay these historical amounts.

22 7. This means that Ellensburg will shoulder any burden associated with the tracking problems
23 of its legacy system. However, because this process is inconsistent with the wording of the
24

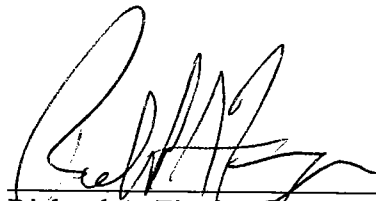
1 Commission's rules on the precise information that must be included in a discontinuation
2 notice, Ellensburg is seeking the waiver described in this Petition.

3 8. This situation means that the Company cannot comply with the literal language of WAC
4 480-120-172(4)(b) and (c) because the charges for non-basic and interexchange service are
5 lumped together and may not be separated. Ellensburg reiterates that there will be no
6 disconnection of basic service for failure to pay the historical amounts existing on the date
7 of bill system conversion. Further, this situation means that Ellensburg cannot comply with
8 the strict requirements of WAC 480-120-172(7) in providing the specific information on the
9 amounts that are owed to avoid discontinuation of basic service. However, again failure to
10 pay the historical amounts existing on the date of bill system conversion will not result in
11 disconnection of basic service.

12
13 **RELIEF REQUESTED**

14 9. The Company respectfully requests a limited exemption from the requirements of WAC
15 480-120-172(4)(b) and (c) and WAC 480-120-172(7) related to the handling of historical
16 amounts past due at the time of conversion of its billing system.

17
18 RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED, this 30th day of November, 2004.

19
20
21 

22 Richard A. Finnigan, WSBA #6443
23 Attorney for Ellensburg Telephone Company