



Public Service Commission of West Virginia

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Proposed PSC / Verizon Agreement Would Fund \$15 Million E-911 Mapping

(Charleston—) Verizon West Virginia would fund a statewide \$15 million E-911 mapping project as part of an agreement reached with state Public Service Commission (PSC) staff for a new incentive regulation plan (IRP) lasting through 2005. The previous IRP expired December 31, 2000.

Subject to Commission approval, the agreement—reached between Verizon, the PSC Consumer Advocate Division and PSC staff—would also cap the company’s basic local telephone rates and require the company to make \$3.3 million in further reductions over the next five years.

The E-911 project, first proposed by the West Virginia E-911 Council, would map every residence and business in the state as a way to speed response during emergencies.

“Basically, an IRP allows a company to operate more efficiently over a set period of time,” said PSC Chairman James D. Williams. The first IRP with Verizon, then C&P Telephone, was instituted in 1988.

(MORE)

The August 9 agreement, if approved, would resolve several cases pending before the Commission, and also provides that Verizon:

- **maintains pricing flexibility for its competitive services.**
- **spends \$8.5 million for continued support of public benefits programs such as “World School” and “West Virginia 2001.”**
- **commits \$375 million to continuing telecommunications infrastructure improvement projects.**
- **contributes \$1.5 million to renovate job sites to offset the cost of attracting new Verizon job centers to the state.**

A public hearing on the proposed IRP agreement will probably be scheduled soon, Williams said.

In June, the PSC ordered the company to reduce its in-state access rates, those rates the company charges long distance carriers for completing calls over Verizon’s local network in the state, by \$18 million over five years. The new in-state access rates will be the same as those established by the Federal Communications Commission for interstate calls, and should lower in-state long distance rates by approximately 3 to 4-cents per minute over the five year period.

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