

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Gregory Scott
Edward A. Garvey
Marshall Johnson
LeRoy Koppendrayner
Phyllis A. Reha

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for Extended Area
Service from Lewiston to Rochester,
St. Charles, Eyota, and Winona

ISSUE DATE: June 6, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-421, 430/CP-97-1599

ORDER CERTIFYING POLLING RESULTS
AND REQUIRING IMPLEMENTATION

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On October 30, 1997, telephone subscribers in the Lewiston exchange filed a petition for extended area service (EAS) to the neighboring exchanges of Rochester, St. Charles, Eyota, and Winona.

On September 17, 1999, the Commission issued an Order finding that all the proposed EAS routes but Lewiston-Eyota met threshold requirements of adjacency and traffic volume. The Commission therefore directed the incumbent local exchange carriers serving Lewiston, Rochester, St. Charles, and Winona¹ to determine the cost of installing and operating the proposed routes and to develop proposed rates to recover those costs. The Commission would then poll Lewiston subscribers to determine whether they wanted EAS at those rates.

The companies duly filed their cost studies and proposed rates, but the Commission did not proceed directly to polling. Instead, in a series of Orders issued between November 1998 and May 2001, the Commission addressed a series of new issues posed by the need to adapt EAS to the competitive telecommunications market mandated by state and federal law. With these issues largely settled, the Commission met on September 25, 2001 to again consider the Lewiston EAS petition.

On October 12, 2001, the Commission issued its ORDER SETTING EAS RATE ADDITIVES AND REQUIRING POLLING.

Polling of telephone subscribers in the Jeffers, Lamberton, Sanborn, Storden, Cherry Grove, Fountain, Granger, Harmony, Preston, Callaway, Dodge Center, Hitterdal, Kabetogama/Ray, Kerkhoven, Lewiston, Taylor Falls and West Concord exchanges took place between February 6 and March 25, 2002.

¹ The Lewiston exchange is served by Sprint Minnesota. The Winona, Rochester, and St. Charles exchanges are served by Qwest Corporation.

The Commission met on May 2, 2002 to consider this matter.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

I. CERTIFICATION OF POLLING RESULTS: LEWISTON TO WINONA

A. Results

The results of the polling show that a majority of voting subscribers in the Lewiston exchange voted in favor of EAS to the Winona exchange. The results were as follows:

Polling results for Lewiston to Winona

Voting Exchange	Petitioned Exchange	Res. EAS Rate	Bus. EAS Rate	% Voting	Yes		No	
					#	%	#	%
Lewiston	Winona	\$4.18	\$8.37	76.0	885	83.5	175	16.5

B. Order for Installation

The third and final statutory criterion for EAS is that a majority of customers responding to a poll in the petitioning exchange favor its installation. Because a majority of Lewiston customers returning their ballots voted in favor of the proposed EAS route, the third and final criterion is met.

Accordingly, the Commission will direct the affected telephone companies (Sprint and Qwest) to implement the requested EAS route within 12 months of the date of this Order. To expedite and coordinate the implementation process, the Commission will order the Sprint to coordinate implementation of EAS in the Lewiston exchange with Qwest, the telephone company serving the Winona exchange, and file a schedule of the planned implementation within 60 days of this Order. The Company will also be required to immediately file an explanation of the reasons for any subsequent change in that schedule.

II. CERTIFICATION OF POLLING RESULTS: LEWISTON TO ROCHESTER/ST. CHARLES

A. Results

The results of the polling show that a majority of voting subscribers in the Lewiston exchange voted in favor of EAS to the Rochester/St. Charles local calling area (LCA). The results were as follows:

Polling results for Lewiston to Rochester/St. Charles

Voting Exchange	Petitioned Exchange	Res. EAS Rate	Bus. EAS Rate	% Voting	Yes		No	
					#	%	#	%
Lewiston	Rochester/St. Charles	\$2.84	\$5.68	75.8	842	79.7	215	20.3

B. Order for Installation

The third and final statutory criterion for EAS is that a majority of customers responding to a poll in the petitioning exchange favor its installation. Because a majority of Lewiston customers returning their ballots voted in favor of this proposed EAS route, the third and final criterion is met for this route as well.

Accordingly, the Commission will direct the telephone company for the petitioning exchange in this matter, Sprint, to implement the requested EAS route within 12 months of the date of this Order. To expedite and coordinate the implementation process, the Commission will order the Sprint to coordinate implementation of EAS in the Lewiston exchange with Qwest Communications, Inc. (Qwest), the telephone company serving the Rochester and St. Charles exchanges, and file a schedule of the planned implementation within 60 days of this Order. The Company will also be required to immediately file an explanation of the reasons for any subsequent change in that schedule.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

Details regarding recovery of the non-recurring expenses caused by non-recurring costs of EAS balloting, further customer notices and the approval process for those notices, as well as tariff filing requirements, are addressed in the Ordering Paragraphs.

ORDER

1. The following two EAS routes are hereby approved:
 - 1) Lewiston to Winona and
 - 2) Lewiston to the Rochester/St. Charles local calling area (LCA).

2. Sprint and Qwest, the affected telephone companies, shall implement the service in their respective exchanges within 12 months following the date of this Order.

3. Sprint shall coordinate the implementation of EAS in Lewiston with Qwest, the telephone company serving Winona, the petitioned exchange, and the Rochester and St. Charles exchanges, the petitioned LCA, and file implementation schedules within 60 days of the Order. If, for some reason, the implementation schedules change, the companies should immediately notify the Commission and explain the reason(s) for the change(s).

4. Sprint shall file the first of two proposed customer notices for approval by Commission staff within 10 days of the date of this Order. The notices - for customers in the petitioning exchange of Lewiston - must list the results of the polling, the EAS additives and the proposed implementation date (s). After approval, the Companies shall serve the notices in the first possible billing cycle in their respective exchanges.
5. Sprint shall send final, Commission approved, notices to customers in the Lewiston exchange, either by bill insert or separate mailing. The final notices must describe the service, instruct customers on dialing, list the additional monthly rates, the date of implementation and any other pertinent information. The company shall issue these notices one month before implementing EAS.
6. Sprint shall make any requests for recovery of non-recurring costs at least 120 days before the planned implementation dates. The Department shall have 30 days to comment on the proposed charges.
7. Sprint shall file tariff sheets reflecting Commission Orders that establish the rates and terms for 1) EAS between Lewiston and Winona and 2) EAS between Lewiston and the Rochester/St. Charles LCA. These tariff sheets shall be filed at least 30 days before implementation of EAS, whereupon this docket (P-421,430/CP-97-1599) will be closed.
8. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio tape) by calling (651) 297-4596 (voice), (651) 297-1200 (TTY), or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).