

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

LeRoy Koppendraye
Marshall Johnson
Phyllis A. Reha
Gregory Scott

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for Extended Area
Service from the Northfield Exchange to the
Metropolitan Calling Area

ISSUE DATE: July 15, 2003

DOCKET NO. P-404, 407, 520, 405, 413, 421,
426, 427, 430/CP-02-587

ORDER CERTIFYING POLLING RESULTS
AND REQUIRING IMPLEMENTATION

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Between May 7 and June 16, 2003, telephone subscribers served through the Northfield exchange – including subscribers served by Qwest Corporation (Qwest) and subscribers served by HickoryTech – were polled about whether they wanted extended area service (EAS) to the metropolitan calling area (MCA).

On July 8, 2003, the Commission met to consider the polling results.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

I. CERTIFICATION OF POLLING RESULTS

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

Voting Exchange	Petitioned Exchange(s)	Res. EAS Rate	Bus. EAS Rate	% Voting	Yes		No	
					#	%	#	%
Northfield (Qwest)	MCA	\$3.06	\$7.59	48.9	3609	71.1	1470	28.9
(Hickory Tech)		\$3.06	\$7.59	50.7	87	76.3	27	23.7
TOTALS		\$3.06	\$7.59	48.9	3696	71.2	1497	28.8

II. 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.¹ Because a majority of the Northfield 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 telephone companies for the petitioning exchange in this matter 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 Qwest and HickoryTech to coordinate implementation of EAS with the telephone companies serving the MCA and file a schedule of the planned implementation within 60 days of this Order.

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 EAS route between the Northfield exchange and the MCA is hereby approved. Qwest and HickoryTech shall implement the service within 12 months following the date of this Order.

¹ The Commission has established three criteria for the installation of EAS. See *In the Matter of an Investigation into the Appropriate Local Calling Scope, in Accordance with Minn. Stat. § 237.161 (1994)*, ORDER AFTER RECONSIDERATION (February 26, 1996). In that Order, the third and final criterion was that if a majority of subscribers vote in favor of the installation of Extended Area Service (EAS), the Commission should order the telephone companies to install the service.

2. Qwest and HickoryTech shall coordinate the implementation of EAS in the Northfield exchange with the telephone companies that serve the MCA, and shall file implementation schedules within 60 days of the Order. If, for some reason, the implementation schedules change, Qwest and HickoryTech should immediately notify the Commission and explain the reason(s) for the change(s).
3. Qwest and HickoryTech shall file the first of two proposed customer notices for approval by Commission staff within 10 days of the date of the Order. The notices shall list the results of the polling, the EAS additives and the proposed implementation date(s). After approval, Qwest and HickoryTech shall serve the notices in the first possible billing cycle in the Northfield exchange.
4. Qwest and HickoryTech shall send final, Commission approved, notices to customers in the petitioning exchange, either by bill insert or separate mailing. The final notices shall describe the service, instruct customers on dialing, list the additional monthly rates, the date of implementation and any other pertinent information. Qwest and HickoryTech must issue these notices one month before they implements EAS.
5. Qwest and HickoryTech 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.
6. The telephone companies serving the MCA shall file proposed customer notices for customers in the MCA for approval by Commission staff 90 days before the anticipated implementation dates for the Northfield route. The notices shall describe the service, instruct customers on dialing, list the additional rates to be paid and the date of implementation. Qwest and HickoryTech shall send the notices during billing cycles that conclude at least one month, but not more than two months, before EAS is implemented.
7. Qwest and HickoryTech shall file tariff sheets reflecting Commission Orders establishing the rates and terms for EAS between the Northfield exchange area and the MCA. These tariff sheets shall be filed at least 30 days before implementation of EAS. Once this is done, this docket shall be closed.

8. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

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