

# Idaho Telecommunications

## Increases for rural telcom company phased in over 4 years

### Case No. ORE-T-14-01, Order No. 33158

**(Nov. 3, 2014)** – The Commission approved an application by Oregon-Idaho Utilities to phase-in a telephone rate increase for the telecommunications company’s approximate 81 customers in rural southwest Idaho.

Customers’ current monthly rate of \$15.77 will increase to \$20 over four years, with the first increase, to \$16 effective Dec. 1 of this year. The rate increases to \$18 on June 1, 2016, and then to \$20 on June 1, 2017.

Oregon-Idaho Utilities has not increased its Idaho residential rate since 1990.

The increase is required by the Federal Communications Commission if Oregon-Idaho Utilities wants to continue to receive federal high-cost support from the FCC’s Connect America Fund (CAF). The FCC created the Connect America Fund to spur development of cellular broadband in rural areas. The fund is an update of the federal Universal Service Fund created in 1988 to make telephone service available at reasonable cost in rural areas.

In order to qualify to receive the federal support, the FCC established a minimum

rate of \$20.46 that local companies must charge their customers. The \$20 rate reached on June 1, 2017, combined with other state fees, will increase residential services to beyond the \$20.46 “rate floor” established by the FCC.

The federal support helps rural companies provide service in areas where greater distances and fewer customers make providing service more costly than in urban areas. The South Mountain Exchange served by Oregon-Idaho Utilities covers 2,126 square miles and represents some of the most difficult to serve customer locations in southwest Idaho. About one-third of the customers have no access to commercial power and rely on gas lamps, lanterns and/or low-grade solar power for lighting. Some homes are heated by wood or oil-burning stoves.

All Idaho telephone customers, including cellular customers, pay into the Connect America Fund so that rates in rural, high-cost can stay comparable to urban rates. The monthly assessment for all Idaho telephone and cellular users is 16 cents per residential line, 25 cents per commercial line and \$.006 per intrastate long-distance billed minute.

# Telecommunication Utilities Under PUC Jurisdiction

**Albion Telephone Corp (ATC)** , P.O. Box 98, Albion, Idaho 83311-0098 **208-673-5335**

**Cambridge Telephone Co.** P.O.Box 88, Cambridge, Idaho 83610-0086 **208-257-3314**

**\*CenturyLink, (formerly Qwest Communications)** North and South Idaho, Box 7888 (83723) or 999 Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83702 **800-339-3929**

**\*CenturyTel of Idaho, Inc.**, dba CenturyLink, 250 Bell Plaza, Room 1601, Salt Lake City, UT, 84010, **801-238-0240**.

**\*CenturyTel of the Gem State**, dba CenturyLink, 250 Bell Plaza, Room 1601, Salt Lake City, UT, 84010, **801-238-0240**.

**\*Frontier Communications Northwest, Inc.** (formerly Verizon Northwest, Inc.), 20575 NW Von Neuman Dr. Ste. 150, Beaverton, OR, 97006, **503-629-2459**

**Direct Communications Rockland, Inc.**, Box 269, 150 S. Main St. Rockland, ID 83271 **208-548-2345**

**Inland Telephone Co.**, 103 South Second Street, Box 171, Roslyn, WA 98941 **509-649-2211**

**Fremont Telecom, Inc.**, dba Fremont Communications, 1221 N. Russell St., Missoula, MT, 59808, **406-541-5454**

**Midvale Telephone Company**, Box 7, Midvale, Idaho 83645, **208-355-2211**

**\*Citizens Telecommunications Company of Idaho**, dba as Frontier Communications of Idaho, 20575 NW Von Neuman Dr. Ste. 150, Beaverton, OR, 97006, **503-629-2459**

**Oregon-Idaho Utilities, Inc.**, 3645 Grand Ave., Ste. 205A, Oakland, CA 94610 **510/338-4621**  
Local: 1023 N. Horton St., Nampa, Idaho 83653 **208-461-7802**

**Pine Telephone System, Inc.**, Box 706, Halfway, OR 97834 **541-742-2201**

**Potlatch Telephone Company**, dba/ TDS Telecom, Box 138, 702 E. Main St. Kendrick, Idaho 83537, **208-835-2211**

**Rural Telephone Company**, 829 W. Madison Avenue, Glens Ferry, Idaho 83623-2372 **208/366-2614**

**Silver Star Communications**, Box 226, Freedom, WY 83120 **307-883-6690**

**Silver Star Communication**, dba Teton Telecom, Box 226, Freedom, WY, 83210, **307-883-6690**

*\*These companies, which represent more than 90 percent of Idaho customers, are no longer rate regulated. However, they are still regulated for customer service.*