



# Legislative Services Office Idaho State Legislature

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Germane Subcommittees of Administrative Rules Review of the Senate and House of Representatives State Affairs Committees

**FROM:** Research and Legislation Staff, Nugent MN

**DATE:** September 2, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Two Sets of Proposed Rules of the Public Utilities Commission Concerning Utility's Customer Relations and Telephone Company Customer Relations  
31.21.01 and 31.41.01

The Public Utilities Commission is proposing to promulgate two sets of proposed rules. The first set of proposed rules relates to a utility's customer relations rules and the second set relates to telephone company customer relations. The first set of proposed rules relate to instances where customers have made deposits or advance payments to obtain utility service. The proposed rules would allow a public utility to transfer a customer deposit to a new account or apply it to the account balance owing on an existing account. The proposed rule also would provide that any deposit or advance payment made to obtain utility services that is unclaimed for more than one year after termination of service is presumed to be abandoned property. The proposed rule would allow a public utility to forward abandoned deposits or advanced payment to a financial assistance program certified by the Public Utilities Commission. Section 14-508, Idaho Code, (unclaimed property law) provides that a financial assistance program "is an entity which assists a utility's low-income and disadvantaged customers with payment of utility bills."

The second set of proposed rules relates to telephone customer service. The proposed rules address customer deposits or advance payments to obtain telephone services. A new rule 111 is being proposed which implements Section 14-508, Idaho Code, like the first det of rules did and states that any deposit or advance payment made to obtain utility service that is unclaimed for more than one year after termination of service is presumed to be abandoned property. The new rule would allow a telephone corporation to forward abandoned deposits or advance payments to financial assistance programs that assist low income and disadvantaged customers with paying their telephone bills. Also Rule 308 is proposed to be amended to revise the procedures for

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issuing and obtaining a medical certificate. In instances of a customer's or family member's serious illness or medical emergency, a certificate may postpone termination of telephone service. Finally the Commission is proposed to be amended to adopt the latest version of slamming regulations adopted by Federal Communications Commission. "Slamming" is the unauthorized change of a customer's selected provider of local or long-distance telephone service. It appears that both sets of proposed rules have been promulgated within the scope of statutory authority granted to the Public Utilities Commission.

cc: Public Utilities Commission