



IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
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Case No. QWE-T-03-15, Order No. 29337  
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### **Commission OKs toll restriction settlement**

BOISE – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission today accepted a settlement between the Qwest Corporation and commission staff that increases the rate for toll restriction service, but moves the service under commission regulation and removes installation fees for residential customers.

Toll restriction prohibits access to long distance carriers on any line on which it is installed. Qwest has more than 38,000 toll restriction customers in Idaho. A typical toll restriction customer would be a parent with a teen line who doesn't want long-distance calls made from that line. Other toll restriction customers include those who are low income or those who have had trouble making long-distance payments in the past but want to retain a phone line for local calls only. The settlement promotes universal service by allowing low-income customers or customers with difficulties making past payments to obtain local calling service without having to make a deposit.

Today's order, which becomes effective Oct. 1, means that toll restriction will no longer be deregulated. As a deregulated service, Qwest would have been able to increase or decrease fees for the service without commission approval.

As part of the settlement, the monthly fee for residential customers who want toll restriction increases from 25 cents to 75 cents. For business lines, the monthly fee increases from \$1 to \$2. Low-income customers who qualify under the state's Lifeline program will not be charged for toll restriction.

The settlement also removes the residential installation fee for the service, which was \$24 in Qwest's northern Idaho territory and \$13.50 in southern Idaho. For business lines, the installation fee will be \$13.50.

The settlement was approved on a 2-1 vote by the commission, with Commissioner Marsha Smith dissenting. Smith concurred with the majority that the service should be regulated, but did not agree with the decision to raise the monthly fee. "Although I recognize that the approved rates are low when compared to

the rates in other states, I believe that customers should not have to pay to block their access to long-distance carriers,” Smith said. The residential rate is the lowest in the 12 states where Qwest has a toll restriction fee.

After reviewing public comments received in the case, commissioners noted there was some confusion from customers about what toll restriction actually does. In addition to blocking access to toll calling, it also blacks access to operator-assisted calls, “dial-around” tolls such as the 10-10 long-distance numbers, pay per call services such as 900 and 976 numbers, and toll calls to directory assistance. Customers with toll restriction may still access toll-free numbers such as 1-800 numbers and still use local directory assistance.

The commission reminded customers desiring to block access to some long-distance calling that they have another alternative, although it is not as encompassing as toll restriction. For a one-time fee of \$5, customers may request that Qwest not assign them a carrier for out-of-state long-distance calls and also not assign them a carrier for in-state long-distance calls. However this will not limit dial-around toll such as the 10-10 numbers, pay per calls such as the 900- and 976- numbers and calls to the operator. For more information, contact Qwest customer service.

Copies of the final order as well as other documents related to the case can be accessed on the commission’s web site at [www.puc.state.id.us](http://www.puc.state.id.us). Click on “File Room,” then on “Telecommunications Cases,” and scroll down to Case Number QWE-T-03-15. Copies are also available at the commission offices on 472 W. Washington St. in Boise, or they can be obtained by writing to the commission at P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID, 83720-0074.