



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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Wisconsin Cell Phone Users to See Reduction in E-911 Monthly Surcharge

MADISON – Cell phone users in Wisconsin will benefit from an almost 50% reduction in the monthly E-911 surcharge, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) announced today. The surcharge funds the state’s Wireless Enhanced 911 program, and the PSC has asked wireless providers to reduce rates from 92 cents per month to 43 cents per month – cutting the surcharge in half.

Wireless Enhanced 911 allows emergency service personnel to pinpoint the exact location of a wireless caller. Without E-911, emergency responders must obtain the location of a caller verbally. In many instances, callers cannot give their exact location because they are too sick, too injured or they simply do not know their exact location. This grant program provides the necessary funding for wireless providers and the counties to implement the technology.

“Wireless Enhanced 911 is a vital program for our state and has proven to be an essential public safety tool,” said Chairperson Dan Ebert. “The increasing number of cellular users can have peace of mind that this program will soon be operational in nearly all counties across the state.”

In 2004, the Wisconsin Legislature passed and Governor Jim Doyle signed legislation establishing the E-911 grant program. That same year, the PSC adopted rules to address which costs are eligible for reimbursement for the state’s cellular providers and the counties who choose to implement the technology. In 2005, the PSC awarded about \$80 million in grants to help implement E-911. Since implemented, several counties have reported successful rescues due to the updated technology.

When the PSC first directed wireless providers to collect for the E-911 program, the surcharge was 83 cents. After the first annual review of the program, which included the review of more detailed and accurate grant applications, the surcharge was increased to 92 cents. Since this adjustment, the base of wireless customers in Wisconsin has grown and requests for reimbursements have been slightly lower, initiating today’s decision to reduce the monthly surcharge. This surcharge will sunset in April 2009.

The documents associated with the Wireless Enhanced 911 program can be viewed on the PSC’s Electronic Regulatory Filing System at <http://psc.wi.gov/>. Type case number 5-TR-104 in the boxes provided on the PSC homepage or click on Electronic Regulatory Filing System button.

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