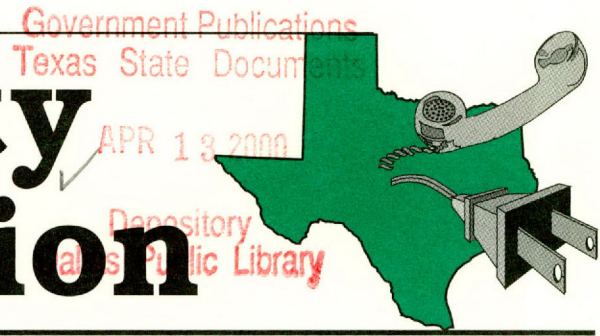


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Public Utility Connection

Volume 2 Issue 3 Public Utility Commission of Texas Fall 1999

Long distance rate bargains up for grabs

This is a good time to shop for long distance telephone service. Many carriers have lowered their rates for calls to other states and calls in Texas. Competition, new laws, and Public Utility Commission action have produced some real bargains. It's a buyer's market, and you owe it to yourself to investigate. It's hard to ignore the ads on television and in newspapers, the offers in the mail, and the calls from telemarketers. But sometimes, those offers don't emphasize the facts you need to know.

Finding the best long distance rate isn't as hard as it might look. Ask a few questions and keep in mind that other options such as dial-around calling cards, prepaid calling cards and wireless telephone service may be best for you. Remember that most companies offer a variety of calling plans. Some plans suit your needs better than others.

Here are some tips for finding the right rate:

- Know your calling patterns. Where do you call most often? Other states?

Other Texas cities? Close-by locations in the local toll category?

- Read the fine print. Most calling plans have restrictions. The advertised price may only apply nights and weekends. A monthly charge may add to the bottom line.
- Ask your current provider if there is a less expensive plan.
- Ask what fees and taxes are added to the cost of the calls.
- Ask if you must make a minimum

See Shop p. 4

Wrong Numbers

To ensure that the quality of service does not decrease with competition, the PUC monitors the complaint trends in this area. The information below is based upon the the number of closed quality of service complaint investigations from Sept. 1, 1998 - Aug. 31, 1999.

Electric Company	Quality of Service Complaints per 5,000 customers*
1. Cherokee County Coop	2.55
2. J-A-C Electric Coop	1.10
3. Southwestern Electric Service Co.	1.07
4. Kimble Electric Coop	1.04
5. Comanche County Coop	0.98
6. North Plains Electric Coop	0.75
7. Entergy	0.96
8. Fannin County Coop	0.75
9. Houston County Coop	0.61
10. Grayson-Collin Coop	0.57

Local Telephone Company	Quality of Service Complaints per 5,000 customers*
1. Blossom Telephone Company	11.364
2. ALENCO	6.042
3. Tatum Telephone Exchange	4.826
4. Riviera Telephone Company, Inc.	4.310
5. Cameron Telephone Company	4.098
6. XIT Rural Telephone Coop	3.861
7. United Telephone Company of Texas	3.333
8. Muenster Telephone Corp. of Texas	2.836
9. Etex Telephone Coop., Inc.	2.542
10. Century Telephone of Port Aransas, Inc.	2.257

*Based on customer numbers from Dec. 1998

Letter from the Commissioners

Electric choice pilot to begin June 2001

Texans to see new opportunities

Dear Customer:

It's coming soon. The beginning of retail electric choice and a world of new opportunities for Texas customers opens in June 2001. This is what choice means for you:

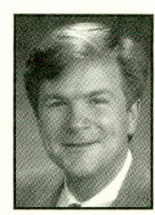
- Lower rates.
- Your choice of electricity supplier.
- Your choice of power - including renewable energy.
- New services like time of day pricing.

Why do we need competition in Texas? Because the cost of generating power is going down and customers like you need to benefit from that. Even though our electric rates are about average, our electric bills are high compared to other states. That's an important reason for reducing the cost.

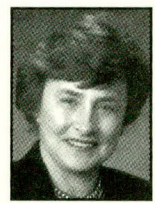
And our four-year experience with competition at the wholesale level is very good. The cost of wholesale power has decreased about 30 percent since 1995.

Some communities aren't wasting time in

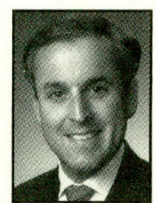
See Two, p. 2



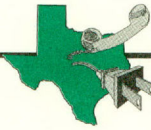
Wood



Walsh



Perlman



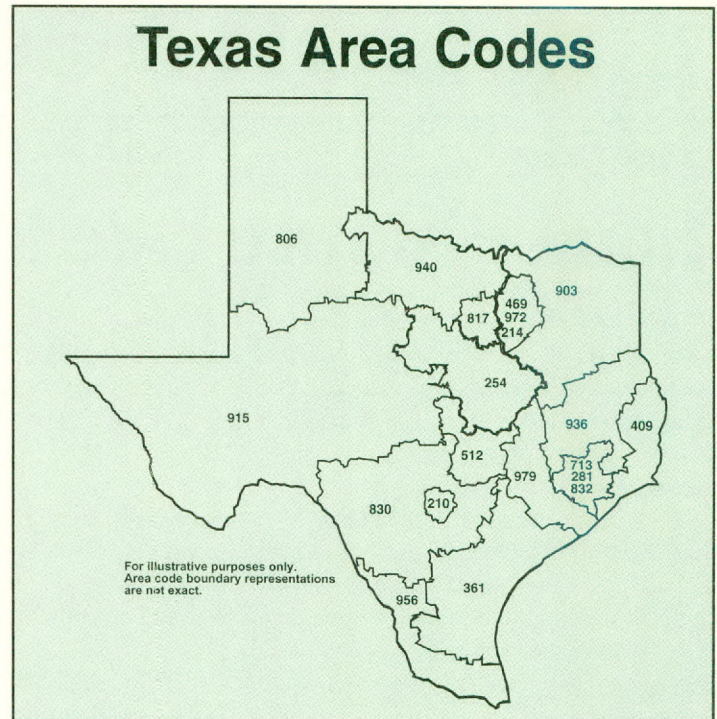
PUC Web Site offers area code information

You remember hearing about area code changes in Texas this year but don't have any details. You've got to update the phone list for members of your statewide organization and aren't sure where to begin. Your aunt lives in Dallas and you think her area code changed.

To answer those questions, you can now check the new, comprehensive Texas Area Codes section on the PUC's Web Site at www.puc.state.tx.us. Its main page features a large map of Texas showing area code boundaries. The 20 Texas area codes are shown in red. When you click on one of the area codes, a map showing all counties and portions of counties within the area code will appear. Maybe you know the city or the phone number but not the area code. Click on the link below the map to view the area code's cities and prefixes.

Where area codes are in transition, there is more information. The area code that adjoins Houston, 409, was split into three area codes earlier this year. Although you can't dial the new area codes until February, you can click on maps of the new area codes created by the split - 979 and 936 - to learn cities and counties served.

Also included is a "to do" checklist, important dates to remember and information on the impact of an area code change on special calling plans.



Public Utility Connection

Office of Customer Protection

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FAX: 512-936-7003

TTY: 512-936-7136

QUESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

1-888-782-8477

customer@puc.state.tx.us

WEB SITE:

www.puc.state.tx.us

Two cities launch pilot projects

Rates decline as customers shop for electricity

Continued from p. 1

getting the benefits of choice. Even before the Legislature passed the restructuring bill, the cities of Gatesville and Olney in Central Texas, with the cooperation of Texas-New Mexico Power, launched pilot projects to shop for power. Those cities now receive power from Bryan Texas Utilities in the largest electric retail competition project of its kind in the country. Their customers' electric rates already have dropped nearly 10 percent.

Electric rates have been frozen for residential and small business customers of investor-owned utilities like TXU and Reliant Energy. On Jan. 1, 2002, those customers will enjoy a guaranteed 6 percent rate cut. Electric cooperatives and city-owned electric companies are exempt from competition and from the rate reductions, but we expect that many of them will cut their rates also.

Pilot programs will allow at least 5 percent of an investor-owned utility's customers to participate in customer choice, starting in June 2001.

PUC staff have been working hard to create the rules and structure that will

ensure a healthy, competitive marketplace. We are also putting into effect the strong customer protections that will make the marketplace safe from abuse, and the Legislature has directed the PUC to help customers benefit in this new environment. We will start an objective customer information program soon to help you shop for the best deal.

Texas lawmakers made it clear that no one should be left out of the new marketplace. Discount prices will be available to qualified low-income persons.

This law also assures that local school districts containing power plants don't lose tax revenues due to competition. These benefits (and others) will be financed from a charge on bills called the System Benefit Fund.

Our rulemaking process is open to all. We are listening to groups that represent all kinds of customers. It is our intention to make Texas the place where competition benefits everyone.

Sincerely,

Chairman Pat Wood, III

Commissioner Judy Walsh

Commissioner Brett Perlman



Need faster internet service?

Options to basic telephone line offer more speed

The PUC doesn't regulate the Internet, but we're often called about it. Why can't you access the 'Net reliably at 56K on a regular telephone line? Well, because a line meant for talking isn't exactly the best choice for high-speed computing. They worked well until the latest computers appeared, but now it's more like roller-skating on the freeway. The speed limits finally started to show.

Speaking of speeds, "bps" means bits per second when measuring a modem's performance. The modem, of course, is what gets you on the Internet. Most people started out on 14.4Kbps modems, with the "K" representing thousands of bps. Modems then went to 28.8Kbps, 33.6Kbps, and then "56K," with the

"bps" eventually dropped for clarity. We're now using "M" modems (Megabit, or millions of bps).

Telephone lines, by law, have to carry information no slower than 2400 "baud," a unit of data transmission speed roughly equivalent to one bit per second. That translates to about 2.4K, or "2Slow" in Internet terms, though most perform much better than that. But the unceasing demand for even greater speed has prompted a number of solutions to the limitations of basic telephone lines. The box below details some of the more promising ones. Availability is the issue. As the Internet continues to grow, you can be sure of more options. So, if you can't get it yet, hang on. It shouldn't be long in coming.

The Method	The Means	The Good	The Bad	The Ugly
POTS - Plain Old Telephone Service	Can get up to 41K or so on a good day, but usually 28-36K tops	Reliable and cheap. Great for talking.	Can't talk and surf at the same time. Need an Internet provider.	Big downloads? You might want to go make a sandwich.
DSL - Digital Subscriber Line	1.5 M, as in 52 times quicker than 28.8K!	Talk and surf at the same time. A double-click away from the 'Net. Very fast	About \$50/mo plus \$200 for special gear & installation.	Unavailable if you're over 3 wire miles from phone company switch.
ISDN - Integrated Services Digital Network	BRI (Basic Rate Interface): 128K - 250K voice, data, and video simultaneously.	"Always on" 'Net access. Sharp signal and great file transfer ability. A terrific home office line.	About \$84/mo, with installation charges of up to \$325 + \$350 for ISDN modem.	Pricey ISDN - specific gear required. Not up to DSL and cable modem speeds.
Cable Modem- Time-Warner's Road Runner	To load 30-sec video: Cable modem=16 sec, DSL=38 sec, BRI ISDN=2 min, Satellite=2 min 36 sec, 28.8K modem=33 min	Big Time Fast (up to 2M!), leaves your phone line free, and you don't need a 'Net provider, saving you another \$20 a month! Instant 'Net access.	Count on \$45/mo plus \$130 to install. Do it yourself and save \$80. Like DSL, requires internal PC card.	Slows down as more people log on (only real weakness), but still guaranteed faster than ISDN with everyone in town online.
Wireless - AT&T "Project Angel"	An 18-in. square "pizza box" antenna. In trial phase now.	Can bring in local, long-distance, 'Net, and TV content in one package.	No prices yet, but reported to be competitive.	Okay if you don't mind the "pizza box" hanging off your house.
Satellite- Direct PC	Up to 400K, or 14 times faster than a 28.8K modem.	Great topic at nerd parties. Cool-looking dish.	\$20/mo. (25 hours), or \$35 (100 hours). Add a 'Net provider to that, and \$200-\$250 for hardware.	Like satellite TV, can be weather-sensitive. Also need unobstructed view of the southern sky. Got trees?



Shop wisely for rates on long distance

Continued from p. 1

number of calls each month in order to get the lower rates.

- Ask if you must pay a fixed charge if you make no long distance calls during a month.
- Consult Web sites that make objective comparisons of rate plans. A list of sites can be found on page 8.

The best way to comparison shop is to compute what you will pay per long distance minute. The advertised price per minute is only part of the equation. To get the cost per minute you must add in all the fees and charges that will appear on your bill.

So if you make most calls during the daytime, a flat rate plan may be best. If you make very few calls each month, you may be better off with a higher rate per minute and fewer additional fees. See Page 5 for some long distance rate comparisons.

Be aware that you have rights to clear, uniform, and understandable information about service and rates. Remind company representatives of that if they refuse to answer your questions.

It is illegal for companies to use deceptive, misleading or unfair marketing practices.

If you believe a company has misrepresented rates or terms of service, please

Want to save money?

The Public Utility Commission of Texas has launched an initiative to help customers find the right long distance rate plan for them. This information kit helps customers save money by providing comparisons of popular long distance rate plans.

To receive your "Finding the Right Rate" long distance shopping kit, call the PUC toll free at 1-888-782-8477 (1-888-PUC-TIPS).

Seven Easy Steps to Calculating Your "Actual Rate per Minute"

1. Using the rates in your current calling plan, calculate:

- Whether most of your calls are out-of-state or in-state.
- What time of day you make most of your calls.
- How many minutes of calls you make in a single month.
- What is the rate per minute?

Where	When	# of minutes	x Rate	= Cost for calls
a) Out-of-state - Business hours (7a.m. - 7p.m.)		_____	x _____	= _____
b) Out-of-state - Evenings & wkds (7p.m. - 7a.m.)		_____	x _____	= _____
c) In-state - Business hours (7a.m. - 7p.m.)		_____	x _____	= _____
d) In-state - Evenings & weekends (7p.m. - 7a.m.)		_____	x _____	= _____

2. Total the minutes and the cost for calls.

Total minutes _____ Total cost _____

3. Add the following:

Total cost for calls (from Step 2): _____

Monthly fee for your calling plan (i.e. \$4.95): _____

Carrier Line Charge*: _____

4. Total charges:

Total charges: _____

5. If your company bills your Federal USF * fund as:

- A percentage of out of state calls:

Add costs for line a & b (from step 1) _____

Multiply by the percentage: _____ %

Federal USF fee = _____

- OR • A percentage of your total bill:

Take total charges from Step 4: _____

Multiply by the percentage: _____ %

Federal USF fee = _____

- OR • A flat fee:

Federal USF fee = _____

6. Add your total charges and the Federal USF fee to get your "Actual" costs.

Total charges _____ + Federal USF fee _____ = "Actual" costs _____

7. To get your "Actual Rate per Minute" take your "Actual" costs and divide it by the total minutes you calculated in Line 2.

"Actual" costs _____ ÷ Total minutes _____ = \$ _____ is your "Actual Rate per Minute"***

*If you don't know how much this is, contact your long distance company for this information.

**Charges for the Texas Infrastructure Fund (TIF) and the Texas Universal Service Fund (TX USF) will also increase your rate per minute.

report it to the PUC at 1-888-782-8477.

Several companies have already lowered the cost of calls within Texas because the PUC recently ordered changes that will lead to a five-cent per minute rate reduction on all calls. These actions implemented legislation that decreased long distance access charges while creating the Texas Universal Service Fund. This legislation required long distance companies to pass through savings to their customers.

The PUC action assures affordable

phone service to rural and low-income Texans and persons with disabilities. Customers have always paid for these programs but the cost was hidden in higher rates paid for long distance calls in Texas. Now, the cost of these programs is paid from a charge on customer bills labeled "TX Universal Service."

The charge, about 3.6 percent of your bill, removed the hidden cost of these programs from in-Texas long distance calls and paved the way for lower rates.

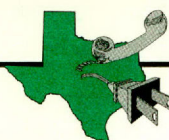
Law limits local phone service disconnects

Thousands of Texans today do not have a telephone in their home due to unpaid long distance bills. These Texans do not have a means of communication or access to emergency and 9-1-1 services. In the last legislative session, Sen. Royce West of Dallas sponsored legislation that prohibits local phone companies from disconnecting basic local telephone service due to non-payment of long distance charges.

To avoid disconnection of local service, customers must continue to pay their basic local telephone charges. If basic local tele-

phone charges are not paid a person can lose dial tone. If all long distance charges are not paid, a person may have long distance service blocked. Long distance companies may also take necessary actions to collect outstanding debts.

Current notices state that the bill must be paid in full to avoid disconnection. When the new rule takes effect around March 2000, disconnection notices will inform customers how much must be paid to keep their local phone service. It will not include long distance charges.



Saving on long distance

Plans for High Volume Callers (more than 60 minutes of long distance per month)

Nov. 1999

Company	Times	Out of State	In State	Monthly Fee*	Federal USF*	Carrier Line Charge*
AT&T 7 cents-a-minute	Anytime	\$0.07	\$0.10	\$4.95	\$0.99	\$1.51
Excel 3 Penny Plan	Peak	\$0.10	\$0.16	\$5.95	\$0.91	\$1.48
	Off Peak	\$0.03	\$0.15			
GTE Nationwide	Anytime	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$4.95	4.9% of total bill	\$1.51
MCI WorldCom Everyday Plus	Peak	\$0.07	\$0.15	\$4.95	7.2% of out of state calls	\$1.46
	Off Peak	\$0.05				
Qwest Count down	Mon.-Fri.	\$0.09	\$0.15	\$4.95	\$1.00	\$1.50
	Weekends	\$0.05				
Sprint Sense Anytime	Anytime	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$4.95**	7.1% of total bill	\$1.50
One Touch Select Weekends	Mon.-Fri.	\$0.09	\$0.09	\$4.95	\$0.99	\$1.42
	Weekends	\$0.05	\$0.05			
Working Assets Around-the-clock plus	Anytime	\$0.07	\$0.10	\$5.95	4.13% of total bill	\$1.04

Plans for Low Volume Callers (more than 60 minutes of long distance per month)

Company	Times	Out of State	In State	Monthly Usage Amount:	Federal USF*	Carrier Line Charge*
AT&T Off Peak 3	Peak	\$0.10	\$0.15	\$1.95 monthly fee	\$0.99	\$1.51
	Off Peak	\$0.05	\$0.10			
Excel Dime Deal	Anytime	\$0.10	\$0.15	\$1.00	\$1.91	\$1.48
GTE Total Call	Anytime	\$0.14	\$0.14	\$3.00	4.9% of total bill	\$1.51
MCI WorldCom Everyday Savings	Peak	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$1.95 monthly fee plus \$5 minimum usage	7.2% of out of state calls	\$1.46
	Off Peak	\$0.05	\$0.15			
Qwest Home rate	Anytime	\$0.10	\$0.15	\$3.00	\$1.00	\$1.50
Sprint Sense	Peak	\$0.25	\$0.25	\$5.00	7.1% of total bill	\$1.50
	Off Peak	\$0.10	\$0.15			
Touch One First Touch Flat	Mon.-Sat.	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$3.00	\$0.99	\$1.42
	Sunday	\$0.05	\$0.05			
Working Assets Best Hours	Peak	\$0.25	\$0.25	None	4.13% of total bill	\$1.04
	Off Peak	\$0.10	\$0.15			

* These charges may increase your rate per minute.

** Monthly fee is waived if you make \$30 worth of calls within a month.

Peak - 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mon. - Fri.

Off Peak - 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., Mon.-Fri., all day Sat. & Sun.



Persistence pays

Be careful of rip-offs when using directory assistance

By now, most people have seen multiple TV ads touting directory assistance (DA) services. Long distance carriers, local phone companies, and wireless carriers are major players in this multi-billion-dollar business.

You might be thinking, "Don't we get that automatically through our local telephone company?" Well, it's not that simple. DA services are competitive offerings, and though you may get local DA from your local phone company, you might not. New competitors in local and long distance may use the underlying carrier's DA database or contract out to firms that may or may not have the most recent or accurate information. Some firms are out of state and know little about Texas. One frustrated complainant was told by a DA operator, "We don't show an Abilene in Texas." The operator was in Minnesota.

You also need to know that the cost of DA varies widely. Since DA is competitive, the market should create lower prices, but you need to pin down prices for comparison.

New services help improve Relay Texas

Relay Texas provides statewide telephone interpreting service between people who can hear and those with hearing loss or speech disabilities. Relay Texas is still growing. Last August the relay service processed more than 414,000 calls, many more than the 50,000 calls in September, 1990, the first month of operations. Relay Texas is considered one of the best relay services in the nation, and continues to aggressively improve its service with new features.

These new services make Relay Texas more useful:

- One-Line Answering Machine Retrieval (AMR). This allows relay users who have an answering machine in both TTY (teletypewriter device for deaf) and voice to ask relay agents to retrieve the voice portion of their messages. The caller requests "AMR" and the agent will listen to their message as the caller puts the

So how do you defend against rip-offs? Do your homework:

- If you're at home and you have Internet access, pick a search engine and type in "directory assistance." You'll have dozens of free services to choose from. To look up local and long distance numbers via the Internet, try one of these web sites:

- www.anywho.com
- www.555-1212.com
- www.altavista.com
- www.bigbook.com
- www.people.yahoo.com
- www.switchboard.com
- www.whowhere.lycos.com
- www.worldpages.com
- www.zip2.com

- Find out if your long-distance carrier subscribes to a local carrier's database. If they don't, and you use DA often, you might want to change to a carrier that does.

- If you're at a payphone, be careful. "Dial around" to get your long-distance carrier (if they do contract with the local carriers) by using their "800" number and then get through to their DA.

phone receiver next to the answering machine. The agent records the voice message, and then types the contents of the message to the caller.

- Hearing Carryover (HCO) to HCO. Hearing people whose speech is difficult to understand but who can type use this service. They must type their portion of the relay call then listen to responses. This allows a speech-disabled person using HCO to communicate with another HCO user.

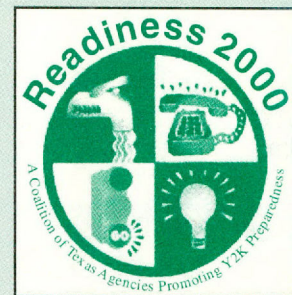
- HCO to TTY. This allows HCO users and TTY users to communicate with each other. The agent reads the TTY user's text to the HCO user. The HCO user types back directly to the TTY user.

The PUC Relay Texas Administrator maintains an E-mail Alert Group at relaytx@puc.state.tx.us. You may use this e-mail address if you have questions about Relay Texas.

Utility providers Y2K-Ready

Electric and telephone service in Texas will not experience any significant disruption from computer systems that are not Y2K-ready, according to reports from electric utilities and telecommunications providers to the PUC.

The year 2000 has the potential to disrupt systems dependent on computer software, micro-



processors and digitally controlled equipment not designed to handle the change from the year 1999 to the year 2000. The PUC created a Y2K project team in January, 1998, to assess preparation by electric and telecommunications providers around the state. The PUC team has worked with Texas utilities and state and national groups to anticipate and prevent potential Y2K problems.

In November, 1998, the PUC adopted rules that ordered all regulated providers to file Y2K contingency plans. Based on these reports, Y2K will not cause major disruptions in electric or telephone service in Texas. Customers who experience any problems in electric or telecommunications services because of Y2K issues should contact their local utility or provider for help.

The PUC also has joined a group of more than three dozen state agencies called Readiness 2000 (www.readiness2000.com) to ensure Texans make a smooth transition into the New Year.



Texans to benefit from electric restructuring

Restructuring of the electric utility industry in Texas means big changes are ahead. When the industry opens to retail competition, the state's electric customers stand to reap big benefits. With the opportunity to choose your retail electric provider, more and more companies will be competing for your business. The result should be lower prices, increased energy efficiencies, and more innovative services from which to choose.

Customer choice for many Texans will begin as early as June, 2001, when the statewide pilot program begins. Although we are in the early stages of the transition to a competitive marketplace, we realize that customer education is an important part of the transition. The Public Utility Commission (PUC) is working to develop a comprehensive customer education program about electric competition to help

customers make informed choices about their electric service and be confident in their choices.

We've asked for feedback from a working group of representatives of other governmental entities, consumer protection groups, citizen advocacy groups and electric utilities to help us as we set goals for a comprehensive education program.

We are committed to reaching all segments of our society - rural and suburban area residents, the elderly, non-English speaking customers - Texans of all ages, from all walks of life and with varying social and economic backgrounds. We want to educate all Texans about customer choice and empower them to make the best choice that meets their needs at the best price.

We also will hire an experienced communications consultant to identify populations we need to reach and how to reach

them, what you the customer already know or want to know about electric restructuring and how to produce the most comprehensive, informative customer education program possible.

Major changes are just ahead. Our goal is to explain those changes to you in terms you can understand and to help you understand how those changes will affect you. We want to make sure you understand the new competitive marketplace so that you will be an eager participant when electric choice begins.

This is a new and exciting time in the history of the electric industry in Texas. It is a new era of choice. We want to make sure your choices are based on good, reliable information we'll be providing through our customer education plan. You'll be hearing more from us as the transition to competition continues.

Member of a coop?

Electric customers likely to see changes from SB 7

If you're a member of an electric cooperative (coop), you're probably wondering, "How is electric restructuring going to affect me?"

Some changes in the way coops do business may have already occurred and others are on the horizon. Senate Bill 7, the electric restructuring bill by Sen. David Sibley and Rep. Steve Wolens, went into effect on Sept. 1, and one of its provisions ended most PUC regulation of coops.

Coops now can set their own rates, their own quality of service standards and their own customer protection rules. The PUC will regulate coops only for such limited purposes as wholesale transmission rates, certification and some reporting requirements.

Senate Bill 7 opens the electric market to competition for most Texas customers on Jan. 1, 2002.

This law gives coops the option to participate or not in a competitive market. The governing board of your coop will make that decision.

Although the PUC no longer regulates customer protection for the coops, Senate Bill 86 by Sen. Jane Nelson and Rep. Debra Danburg requires coops to adopt rules that provide the same customer protections as those required of investor-owned utilities such as Reliant Energy HL&P, TXU Electric and Entergy.

If you have a question or complaint about your coop, contact the coop directly. Although the PUC no longer investigates complaints against coops, we do forward any complaints we receive. The coops must then notify the PUC of their responses to the complaints.

Customer Safeguards Provided by Senate Bill 86

- protection against fraudulent, unfair, misleading or deceptive practices
- protection against "cramming," (billing for services that are not authorized or received by the customer)
- information concerning rates, terms and conditions and environmental benefits of production facilities
- protection from discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, nationality, religion, marital status, income level, or source of income and from unreasonable discrimination on the basis of geographic location
- impartial and prompt dispute resolution
- privacy of a customer's electric consumption records and credit information
- accurate metering and billing
- bills in a clear, readable format with easy-to-understand language
- information on low-income assistance programs and deferred payment plans
- all consumer protections and disclosures established by the Fair Credit Reporting Act and the Truth in Lending Act.



Contact your telephone provider

Telephone (Long distance)

AT&T	1-800-222-0300	www.att.com
GTE	1-800-483-3737	www.gte.com
MCI WorldCom	1-800-950-5555	www.mciworldcom.com
Excel	1-800-444-3333	www.excel.com
Sprint	1-800-877-7746	www.sprint.com
Touch 1	1-800-286-8241	www.touch1.com

Telephone (Local)

GTE Southwest	1-888-972-1889	www.gte.com
Southwestern Bell	1-800-246-8464	www.swbell.com
Sprint (Centel/United)	1-800-488-7995	www.sprint.com

Long Distance Rate Comparison

If you've been shopping for the best rates for your long distance, local toll or wireless phone service, you're probably overwhelmed by the choices. Competition means increased customer choice, but it also increases the companies competing for your telephone service dollars. Sorting out rates and calling plans can be a monumental task.

A number of Internet sites offer you free assistance. These sites analyze long distance rates, phone plans, calling card and dial-around rates. Most are easy to read. Other Web sites offer tips on how to save on your long distance calls. These Web sites may be helpful:

www.consumer-action.org	www.teleworth.com
www.essential.co	www.cellmania.com
www.salestar.com	www.talkingonair.com
www.point.com	
www.tcp.com/~lgreenf/long.htm	

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