

**Consumer Complaint Orders - Issued 1999**

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT FILED BY LOU SCHUELKE ON BEHALF OF LAZY S CAMPGROUND, HILL CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA, AGAINST U S WEST COMMUNICATIONS, INC. REGARDING POOR SERVICE AND REQUEST TO HAVE LINES UPDATED</b>	) ) ) ) ) ) )	<b>ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF HEARING</b>  <b>CT99-023</b>
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On August 5, 1999, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a complaint filed by Lou Schuelke on behalf of Lazy S Campground, Hill City, South Dakota (Complainant), against U S WEST Communications, Inc. (U S WEST). The Complainant states that "We have been dealing with phone outages since April. Every time it rained we were without a phone. This went on through May and into June. Then it worked fairly good for a time. Then in July it started going dead again, rain or shine, didn't make any difference. It has been out 9 days since the 13th of July. This last stretch we were out 7 days. It came on briefly twice and yesterday it came on again and is still on this morning. The phone repairman came yesterday and it was already working. I asked him what he'd done and he said nothing. In visiting with different technicians I get the feeling the equipment must be in poor shape. Being owners of a small campground near Deerfield, the phone is a necessary part of our business. One of our biggest connections you might say. I have no idea how much business this has cost us, but undoubtedly it has cost us a lot." Complainant requests that the Public Utilities Commission investigate U S WEST and put on some pressure so they either upgrade or do something to improve our service.

Pursuant to ARSD 20:10:01:08.01 and 20:10:01:09, if a complaint cannot be settled without formal action, the Commission shall determine if the complaint shows probable cause of an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission to go forward with the complaint.

On August 17, 1999, at a duly noticed meeting, the Complainant presented her position to the Commission. U S WEST stated that it had not had time to investigate the complaint. The Commission voted unanimously to find probable cause.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49- 13-1 through 49-13-14.1, 49-31-3, 49-31-7, 49-31-7.1, 49-31-11, 49-31-60, and 49-31-61, and ARSD 20:10:01:07.01 through 20:10:01:15.01, inclusive, and ARSD Chapter 20:10:33.

A hearing shall be held at 9:00 a.m. (MST), on November 18, 1999, in the Bear e Room at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, 2211 LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, South Dakota. The hearing is open to the public. All persons testifying shall be subject to cross-examination.

The issue at the hearing is whether U S WEST committed an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission, and, if so, what remedy is appropriate.

The hearing shall be an adversary proceeding conducted pursuant to SDCL Chapter 1-26. All parties have the right to be present and to be represented by an attorney. These rights and other due process rights shall be forfeited if not exercised at the hearing. If you or your representative fail to appear at the time and place set for the hearing, the Final Decision will be based solely on the testimony and evidence provided, if any, during the hearing or a Final Decision may be issued by default pursuant to SDCL 1-26-20. After the hearing the Commission will consider all evidence and testimony that was presented at the hearing. The Commission will then enter Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and a Final Decision regarding this matter. As a result of this hearing, the Commission shall determine whether U S WEST committed an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission, and, if so, what remedy is appropriate. The Commission's Final Decision may be appealed by the parties to the state Circuit Court and the state Supreme Court as provided by law. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the hearing shall commence at 9:00 a.m. (MST), on November 18, 1999, in the Bear e Room at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, 2211 LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, South Dakota.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing is being held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Public Utilities Commission at 1-800- 332-1782 at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 7th day of October, 1999.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

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JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

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PAM NELSON, Commissioner

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LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner

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