

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment is welcome on proposed draft legislation related to the regulation of small water and sewer utilities in Montana and utility integrated resource planning.

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee (ETIC) of the Legislature met July 19-20 and requested draft legislative proposals be revised and posted for public comment. Similar proposals were available for comment in June. The committee requested changes to the proposals and a new comment period for the public.

The ETIC conducted a program review of the PSC's regulation of small water and sewer utilities in Montana. At this time, only a handful of small, privately owned public water and sewer utilities have filed rate schedules with the PSC, which has regulatory authority over them. The PSC has struggled to implement a strategy to bring utilities into compliance. The ETIC is requesting specific comment on two policy options:

- LC SMW2 – Provide for standard rates for small sewer and water utilities
- LC SMW3 – Authorize PSC to grant standard rates to small sewer and water utilities

Public comments should be submitted before 5 p.m. **August 22** to Sonja Nowakowski, ETIC staff, at legresponse@mt.gov (put small water in the subject line) or to Legislative Services Division, Attn. Sonja Nowakowski, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704.

The ETIC allocated time to a review of Montana's integrated resource planning and procurement processes. The committee heard concerns about stakeholder input during development of a plan by a utility and during PSC review of a plan. The committee is requesting specific comment on:

- LC IRP2 – Require utility to hold public meetings prior to submitting a plan

Public comments should be submitted before 5 p.m. **August 22** to Sonja Nowakowski, ETIC staff, at legresponse@mt.gov (put IRP in the subject line) or to Legislative Services Division, Attn. Sonja Nowakowski, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704.

The ETIC will meet September 10 in Helena to review and discuss the public comments and the draft legislation. The committee will then determine whether they should be brought before the 2019 Legislature. All comments received by the deadline will be compiled and provided to the ETIC prior to the meeting.

Comments also may be submitted in the form of proposed draft amendments to the legislation. If you have any difficulty opening the documents linked above or submitting your comments, please contact Sonja Nowakowski at (406) 444-3078.