



NEWS RELEASE - CONSUMER ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 4, 2009

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COLORADO CONSUMER COUNSEL WEBSITE OUTLINES TELECOMMUNICATION OPTIONS

DENVER - Colorado consumers have many choices for phone service and the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC), an agency within the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), has compiled rate comparisons for landline, wireless and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services, as well as Prepaid Calling cards to help them make their decision. The results can be found at www.dora.state.co.us/occ.

Over the last decade, the number of landline phones nationally has dropped 20 percent as wireless phones have grown almost three fold to more than 270 million. In Colorado, the number of high speed Internet lines has increased 700 percent in the last eight years to more than 2.3 million.

"The exciting thing is that there are many choices for consumers today," said Consumer Counsel Bill Levis. "With more choices comes more confusion, so we are happy to be able to offer this cost comparison for consumers."

Highlights of the site include:

- Consumers may save with Qwest's message landline option over traditional basic service if fewer than 90 calls are made monthly.
- Wireless and VOIP options may be cheaper yet if customers are interested in long distance calling and features such as call forwarding, call waiting, and three way calling.
- If a consumer is most interested in continuous 9-1-1 access, it is critical to have one traditional phone plugged directly into a wall outlet should electricity fail. Cordless and any phones that require plugging into an electrical outlet may not work in an emergency. It is not well known that all wireless phones, including those no longer under contract to a carrier, have 9-1-1 service as long as the battery is charged.
- Customers who don't mind dialing up to 33 digits may save money by purchasing prepaid cards for long distance calling.

The OCC represents the public interest, and specifically those of residential, agricultural and small business consumers, in energy and telecommunication proceedings before the state Public Utilities Commission. For more information about the OCC, go to www.dora.state.co.us/occ.

DORA is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado. Consumer protection is our mission.

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