



Florida Public Service Commission

Consumer Bulletin

Braulio L. Baez, Chairman



Choosing A Local Toll Company

Are you aware that you can choose a company other than your current local provider to supply your local toll service? The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) has become aware that many consumers may not realize that they have the option, or even understand the difference between toll and local toll calls.

Local tolls are calls you make that are long distance and are beyond your local calling area. They are not considered "traditional" long distance calls, yet they are similar and consumers are charged on a per-minute basis. In the past, local toll calls were handled and billed by your local telephone company, but now you can choose a different company to provide this service.

Now that the local toll market is competitive, you have the opportunity to pre-select the companies for both your local toll calls and your toll calls (long distance calls outside the operating area of the local exchange company). This enables you to take advantage of the various rates and services these companies have to offer.

When deciding which company you want to provide your local toll service, keep in mind that you may lose some \$.25 calling plans, which are commonly called "extended calling scopes" (ECS). ECS provides a set priced dollar amount for customer dialed or operator assistance calls to customers beyond their calling areas. These extended calling plans are included in your local toll that is provided by your local exchange company. The new company you select may charge a per minute rate that could be higher than the current ECS rate you are charged.

Remember, as a consumer, you have the right to select the local toll and long distance companies of your choice. If you discover either of these services has been changed without your consent – better known as slamming – call your local telephone company or long distance company to be reconnected

to the company of your choice at no charge. If you are not satisfied with the company's response, please call the PSC. The PSC can also assist by providing you with a free copy of its **How to Choose a Local Toll Company** brochure. For a copy of this brochure and for any other information, please call the PSC at **1-800-342-3552**. You may also e-mail us at contact@psc.state.fl.us, or visit our Internet home page at <http://www.floridapsc.com>.

Tips on Selecting a Local Toll Company

Check the information pages of your phone book for a list of the local toll service providers in your area. You can also check with your local toll service provider for a list of these companies.

Ask your local toll provider about any sales or special discount programs you might qualify for.

Make sure the company you are considering is reputable. Call the PSC at **1-800-342-3552** or e-mail us at contact@psc.state.fl.us and ask if the company has a certificate to operate in Florida.

As a sidebar, if you don't want to be bothered with sales pitches for your telephone services, sign up for the "No Calls List" with the Federal Trade Commission at **1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357)**.

Braulio L. Baez is the Chairman of the Florida Public Service Commission. The PSC sets the rates regulated utility companies charge for natural gas, electric and telephone service within the state. In 36 counties, it sets the price you pay for the water you drink, if your water company is privately owned.