

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

March 30, 2009

Mr. Jason Merkel
Helena Division Manager
Northwestern Energy
1315 North Main Street
Helena, MT 59604-5329

Re: EB-09-GB-0027

Mr. Merkel:

The Federal Communications Commission contacted your company by letter dated January 9, 2006, indicating that it had received complaints of harmful radio interference possibly caused by power line equipment maintained by your company.¹ The interference was reported by:

(name withheld)
(address withheld)
Helena, MT 59601

Phone: (withheld)

In February of 2006, representatives of Northwest Energy (Mr. Scott Millam and Mr. Charles Smith) visited Mr. Willett. During the course of that visit, your representatives indicated that they would work with the complainant going forward to locate and resolve the instances of interference. During a follow up conversation with Mr. Riley Hollingsworth of the FCC, you further indicated that an electrical engineer would be coming out to Mr. Willett's residence in mid-March 2006, to attempt to locate additional sources of the interference. The engineer located 15 sources of interference during his visit. During 2007 and into 2008, the licensee continued to experience interference and continued to contact Northwestern Energy to correct the problems. Northwestern did continue to contact the licensee, but was unable to satisfactorily locate and resolve the outstanding instances of interference.

In September of 2008, Northwestern Energy indicated that it had purchased new noise locating equipment and would be coming out on the 15th of September to locate and resolve the remaining instances of interference. Northwestern Energy did not contact the licensee as promised, nor did any representatives come out to Mr. Willett's residence.

¹ A copy of that letter is enclosed for your convenience.

Indeed, in December of 2008, Northwestern Energy contacted Mr. Willett and indicated that it had done all it could to resolve the instances of interference.

Such a response is not acceptable. Given the fact this case has been ongoing for quite some time without resolution and Northwestern Energy has had ample time to locate the instances of interference and make the necessary repairs, you are directed to respond to the undersigned within 60 days of receipt of this letter detailing what steps you have taken to resolve the remaining instances of interference that are reported as being caused by Northwestern Energy equipment. Should the remaining interference problems not be resolved within those 60 days, Northwestern Energy will be required to provide the undersigned with a status update every two (2) weeks going forward as to what progress, if any, has been made to resolve the matter.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at 717-338-2577.

Sincerely,

Laura L. Smith
Special Counsel

Cc: Seattle Field Office
Western Regional Director