



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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## **FCC PROPOSES RULES FOR BROADBAND OVER POWER LINES TO PROMOTE BROADBAND SERVICE TO UNDERSERVED AREAS AND INCREASE COMPETITION**

Washington, DC - As part of its ongoing efforts to promote access to broadband services for all Americans and to encourage new facilities-based broadband platforms, the Federal Communications Commission today proposed changes to certain technical rules that will foster broadband deployment using the significantly untapped capabilities of the nation's power grid, while safeguarding existing services against harmful interference.

The Part 15 rule changes, proposed in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice), set forth procedures to measure the radiofrequency (RF) energy emitted by equipment used to provide broadband service over power lines and establish particularized interference mitigation requirements. By facilitating access to broadband over power lines (BPL), the Commission takes an important step toward increasing the availability of broadband in rural and underserved areas because power lines reach virtually every home and community in the country. In areas in which consumers already have broadband access, BPL enhances competition by providing another broadband alternative. These proposed changes will also facilitate the ability of electric utilities to dynamically manage the power grid itself, increasing network reliability.

Specifically, the Notice adopted by the Commission:

- proposes rules requiring BPL devices to employ adaptive interference mitigation techniques to prevent harmful interference to existing users, such as public safety and amateur radio operators. These techniques would enable BPL devices to cease operations altogether, dynamically reduce transmit power, and/or avoid operating on specific frequencies to prevent harmful interference;
- proposes developing a public database that would include such information as location, operational frequencies, and modulation type of BPL devices, which will facilitate the resolution of interference issues in a timely fashion;
- seeks comment on specific RF measurement guidelines for BPL devices and other carrier current systems. These guidelines will ensure that emission measurements for these systems are made in a consistent manner. While the Notice addresses RF measurement guidelines, it does not propose any changes to existing applicable emission limits.

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Notably, some electric utilities already use a lower speed version of BPL technology to manage their internal networks. Widespread deployment of BPL devices will afford these same companies added benefits such as, remote power outage notification, load management to reduce peak power usage, improved load balancing, and remote meter reading capabilities.

Action by the Commission, February 12, 2004, by Notice of Proposed Rule Making (FCC 04-29). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Martin and Adelstein, with Commissioner Copps approving in part and dissenting in part. Separate statements issued by Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin, and Adelstein.

ET Docket No. 04-37

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