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**NorthWestern Energy, Access Spectrum Announce Purchase
of Upper 700 MHz A Block Spectrum Licenses in Montana, S. Dakota
Spectrum Will Enhance Northwestern Energy's Mission Critical Communications**

BUTTE, Mont. — May 8, 2015 — NorthWestern Energy and Access Spectrum LLC are pleased to announce they have signed a purchase agreement through which NorthWestern Energy will acquire multiple licenses in the Upper 700 MHz A Block covering Montana and South Dakota.

NorthWestern Energy will use the spectrum for a variety of fixed and mobile data solutions. The company is already in the planning phase and has engaged with a variety of different equipment providers to design and deploy new systems on this spectrum.

"We believe this is just the beginning for the utility industry and the Upper 700 MHz A Block," said Michael Gottdenker, Chairman and CEO of Access Spectrum. "For too long, utilities have not had access to exclusive, licensed spectrum. For too long, utilities have had to compete with commercial carriers for licensed spectrum through an auction. For too long, utility operations have been spread over too many bands. The Upper 700 MHz A Block solves all of these problems."

"The Upper 700 MHz A Block is available today, anywhere in the nation, on an exclusive basis for utilities and outside of an auction process," Gottdenker added. "This spectrum band can and should be the spectrum home utilities are looking for."

Vernan Hogge, director of telecommunications and networks at NorthWestern Energy, said it is extremely difficult to obtain spectrum in a contiguous block for medium bandwidth applications.

"We have been pursuing this direction for several years and have been frustrated by lack of available spectrum in lower frequencies that will give good propagation, litigation between spectrum owners that delays agreements, and interference or incumbent issues," Hogge said. "The 700 MHz A Block opportunity has had none of those issues, and Access Spectrum has been very good to work with as we forged an agreement that met our needs."

Hogge added that he has been fortunate to have an executive team that understands the importance of spectrum NorthWestern Energy can control and use for applications now and in the future. The support of the executive team and the cooperation of Access Spectrum made this a very good transaction.

NorthWestern Energy and Access Spectrum have begun the FCC approval process which is expected take a few weeks to complete. Once approved, NorthWestern Energy will own the licenses and can begin using the spectrum.

About NorthWestern Energy

NorthWestern Energy provides electricity and natural gas in the Upper Midwest and Northwest, serving approximately 678,200 customers in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. More information on NorthWestern Energy is available on the company's website at www.northwesternenergy.com.

About Access Spectrum

Access Spectrum holds 28 of the 52 licenses in the Upper 700 MHz A Block covering about half of the United States. These licenses can be sub-divided to cover specific geographies. Access Spectrum works closely with the holders of the remaining 24 licenses and can facilitate the sale of licenses in the remainder of the country.

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