

## WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §24-2-12

**§24-2-12. What acts may not be done without consent of commission; consent in advance of exemption of transactions; when sale, etc., of franchises, mergers, etc., void.**

Unless the consent and approval of the Public Service Commission of West Virginia is first obtained: (a) No public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may enter into any contract with any other utility to operate any line or plant of any other utility subject thereto, nor which will enable such public utility to operate their lines or plants in connection with each other, but this shall not be construed to prevent physical connections between utilities supplying the same service or commodity, for temporary purposes only, upon condition, however, that prompt notice thereof be given to the commission for such action, if any, as it may deem necessary, and thereafter the commission may require such connection to be removed or discontinued; (b) no public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may purchase, lease, or in any other manner acquire control, direct or indirect, over the franchises, licenses, permits, plants, equipment, business or other property of any other utility; (c) no public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may assign, transfer, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of its franchises, licenses, permits, plants, equipment, business or other property or any part thereof; but this shall not be construed to prevent the sale, lease, assignment or transfer by any public utility of any tangible personal property which is not necessary or useful, nor will become necessary or useful in the future, in the performance of its duties to the public; (d) no public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may, by any means, direct or indirect, merge or consolidate its franchises, licenses, permits, plants, equipment, business or other property with that of any other public utility; (e) no public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may purchase, acquire, take or receive any stock, stock certificates, bonds, notes or other evidence of indebtedness of any other public utility; (f) no public utility subject to the provisions of this chapter, except railroads other than street railroads, may, by any means, direct or indirect, enter into any contract or arrangement for management, construction, engineering, supply or financial services or for the furnishing of any other service, property or thing, with any affiliated corporation, person or interest; (g) no person or corporation, whether or not organized under the laws of this state, may acquire either directly or indirectly a majority of the common stock of any public utility organized and doing business in this state.

The commission may grant its consent in advance or exempt from the requirements of this section all assignments, transfers, leases, sales or other disposition of the whole or any part of the franchises, licenses, permits, plants, equipment, business or other property of any public utility, or any merger or consolidation thereof and every contract, purchase of stocks, arrangement, transfer or acquisition of control, or other transaction referred to in this

section, upon proper showing that the terms and conditions thereof are reasonable and that neither party thereto is given an undue advantage over the other, and do not adversely affect the public in this state.

The commission shall prescribe such rules and regulations as, in its opinion, are necessary for the reasonable enforcement and administration of this section, including the procedure to be followed, the notice to be given of any hearing hereunder, if it deems a hearing necessary, and after such hearing or in case no hearing is required, the commission shall, if the public will be inconvenienced thereby, enter such order as it may deem proper and as the circumstances may require, attaching thereto such conditions as it may deem proper, consent to the entering into or doing of the things herein provided, without approving the terms and conditions thereof, and thereupon it shall be lawful to do the things provided for in such order.

Every assignment, transfer, lease, sale or other disposition of the whole or any part of the franchises, licenses, permits, plant, equipment, business or other property of any public utility, or any merger or consolidation thereof and every contract, purchase of stock, arrangement, transfer or acquisition of control or other transaction referred to in this section made otherwise than as hereinbefore provided shall be void to the extent that the interests of the public in this state are adversely affected, but this shall not be construed to relieve any utility from any duty required by this section.