

NEWS

For immediate release
May 04, 2010
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Ten Digit Dialing to Start June 5; Alabama's New 938 Area Code Effective July 10

The Alabama Public Service Commission is issuing this notice to remind residents in the area code 256 region that, beginning on June 5, 2010, all telephone calls must be dialed using both the area code and the seven digit phone number (area code + seven digit phone number). This will include calls to other 256 numbers as well. Local calls dialed using only seven digits will result in a recorded message instructing the caller to hang up and dial the call again - using all ten digits. The "ten-digit dialing" requirement is in response to the near exhaustion of telephone numbers available for the area code 256 region.

Beginning in July 2010, a second area code will be introduced within the geographical boundaries of the 256 area code. The new area code will be 938. Using more than one area code for telephone numbers within the same geographic boundaries is known as an area code "overlay". Area code overlays are employed in many surrounding states and in states throughout the nation. One advantage of using two area codes within the same geographical region is that all telephone subscribers who currently have a telephone number that includes the 256 area code will retain that area code and number thus avoiding the cost and inconvenience of changing their area code.

Calls that are local before the area code change will still be local calls after the new area code is assigned, even though all ten digits must be dialed. Calls that are long distance before the 938 area code overlay will remain long distance calls. Additionally, your rates, services, or coverage area will not change due to the overlay.

The "ten-digit dialing" requirement will apply to all types of phone services within the existing 256 area code including wireless phones. Calls to 9-1-1, 4-1-1, and other N-1-1 calls will be dialed exactly as they are now.

Anyone activating phone service after July 10, 2010, may receive a 938 area code number. Anyone receiving a 938 area code will also need to use ten-digit dialing for all calls

Important Dates

- June 5, 2010: Mandatory Ten Digit Dialing Begins
- July 10, 2010: First Code Activations for 938