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NEWS RELEASE

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10-digit Dialing Begins Saturday in Western Kentucky

Dialing area code 270 will be required to complete local calls

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 31, 2014) – Mandatory 10-digit dialing for local calls begins tomorrow in area code 270.

“Starting at midnight, it will be necessary to dial area code 270 as well as the seven-digit local number in order to complete a local call in area code 270,” Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) Chairman David Armstrong said. “The PSC hopes that everyone has used the six-month transitional period to prepare for this change.”

Ten-digit dialing is necessary because area code 364 is being overlaid on the same geographic area as the current area code 270.

The first numbers using area code 364 may be assigned beginning March 3, 2014. Area code 270 numbers can be assigned after that date, but their availability will depend on how many remain in the inventory of each individual service provider.

Even when area code 364 goes into use, the vast majority of residential and business phone numbers in the area will continue to use area code 270. Only some new customers and those who wish to switch to the new area code will have 364 numbers.

“All current area code 270 number will stay the same when the new area code becomes effective,” Armstrong said. “Only the dialing pattern is changing.”

Area code 364 was created in December 2012 when the PSC decided that the best way to meet the need for more telephone numbers in area code 270 was through the creation of an overlay, which superimposes a new area code over an existing area code.

The overlay option is the least disruptive for all customers and imposes the smallest cost on businesses in the area, the PSC said in its order creating area code 364. This is the first area code in Kentucky created by an overlay.

Dialing 1 for local calls is not necessary with the overlay. Local calls will not become long-distance calls.

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In its December 2012 order, the PSC noted that public comments received in the case overwhelmingly favored an overlay. The other option was to split area code 270 and designate a portion as area code 364, with both landline and wireless customers in the affected portion required to change their area code as a result.

Area code overlays have become the preferred method for creating new area codes nationwide. They pose the fewest technical issues for telecommunications providers.

All records in the area code case are available on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov. The case number is 2012-00129.

The PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It regulates more than 1,500 gas, water, sewer, electric and telecommunication utilities operating in Kentucky and has approximately 90 employees.

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FACT SHEET FOLLOWS

TEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT KENTUCKY'S NEW AREA CODE

1. All current area code 270 numbers remain unchanged. Everyone with a 270 area code number can keep it. Nobody is required to change their area code or phone number.
2. The overlay affects both landline and wireless services.
3. Area code 364 will be overlaid on top of area code 270. That means that area codes 270 and 364 will occupy the same physical space beginning March 2014.
4. In order to distinguish between phone numbers with area code 270 and those with area code 364, 10-digit dialing will be required for all local calls within the overlay.
5. Ten-digit dialing also will be required for local calls into or out of the overlay in those areas that now allow seven-digit local calling across the area code 270 boundary.
6. Ten-digit dialing means dialing the area code before dialing the number itself – for example: 270-555-1212 or 364-555-1212.
7. Long-distance calls within the overlay will require 11-digit (1-plus) dialing, just as long distance calls to other area codes do now.
8. A transition period, known as permissive dialing, began Aug. 3, 2013, and ends Jan. 31, 2014. During that time, local calls could be made using either seven-digit or 10-digit dialing.
9. On Feb. 1, 2014, 10-digit dialing for local calls becomes mandatory in the area code 270/364 territory.
10. Numbers with area code 364 may be distributed beginning March 3, 2014. Telecommunication service providers may continue to distribute 270 numbers for as long as they have any remaining in their inventories.