



California Public Utilities Commission

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PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: A.15-11-017

CPUC PROVIDES FOR MORE PHONE NUMBERS IN 323 AREA CODE

SAN FRANCISCO, July 14, 2016 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today took action to ensure that phone numbers continue to be available to meet demand in the 323 area code by allowing both the 213 and 323 area codes to be used in the same geographic region.

This area code overlay of sorts eliminates the boundaries between the 213 and 323 area codes in Southern California, making either area code available to serve the 213 and 323 geographic region. In a traditional area code overlay, a new area code is added to the existing geographic area served by the area code in which numbers are depleting. In this case, instead of adding a new area code to the 323 area code region, the CPUC eliminated the boundaries in which the two area codes can be allocated so that the 213 and 323 numbers will be available for the whole region.

All customers with existing 213 and 323 numbers will retain their current telephone numbers; however, customers must dial 1 plus the three-digit area code for all calls to and from telephone numbers with the 213 and 323 area codes. Customers can use this new dialing procedure in January 2017 and continue to do so for six months (called the permissive dialing period). However, customers must use the new dialing procedure, 1+10 digit dialing at the start of the mandatory dialing period in July 2017.

Despite number conservation measures, the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) projects the 323 area code will exhaust in the second quarter of 2017. NANPA is the neutral third-party responsible for forecasting the exhaust of geographic area codes and initiating the process to address the issue. The NANPA presented a boundary elimination overlay in its application

because of the unique geography of the 323 area code. Alternatives, such as an overlay for just the 323 or a further split of the 323 area code, were not considered as both would require the introduction of a third area code in Los Angeles. The CPUC's decision today approved NANPA's application, submitted to the CPUC on behalf of the telecommunications industry.

“The boundary elimination overlay will cause the least inconvenience for consumers and is the option preferred by customers,” said Commissioner Liane M. Randolph, who is assigned to the proceeding. “The new dialing procedure will not affect the distinction between local and toll calls or the rates charged for the calls. We have ordered a public education plan to help explain the area code issue and dialing requirements to consumers in the 213 and 323 area codes.”

The 213 area code is one of California's original three area codes, as it was created with the implementation of area codes nationwide in 1947. It originally covered the southern third of California. The 323 area code was created when it was split off of the 213 area code in June 1998. The area served by the 323 area code surrounds the region covered by the 213 area code and is largely made up of the City of Los Angeles as well as neighboring cities and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The 213 area code is located in the center of the region covered by the 323 area code.

The CPUC presented the boundary elimination overlay for the 323 and 213 area codes at two Local Jurisdiction meetings on September 8, 2015, in the City of South Gate and the City of Los Angeles and at four public meetings held on September 9 and 10, 2015, in South Pasadena and the City of Los Angeles.

The proposal voted on is available at:

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M165/K053/165053198.PDF>.

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