

## Is Local 10 Digit Dialing Right For You?

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator has determined that the 918 area code will run out of telephone numbers in the fourth quarter of 2011 and has directed the Oklahoma Corporation Commission to determine a solution to “relieve” the situation. The proposed solutions are an area code “geographic split” or an area code “all services distributed overlay”.

On June 25, 2009 a hearing on the merits of this case was held before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). The ALJ’s findings and recommendation in this matter was filed on Monday, July 27. In summary, the ALJ recommends that the Corporation Commission adopt an “all services distributed overlay” as the method of numbering relief for area code 918. This is only a recommendation as it now goes to the Commissioners who will make the actual decision. There is no schedule yet on when the Corporation Commission will take up this matter.

An area code “all services distributed overlay” would take the geographic region, currently served by the 918 area code, and add a second area code to the region. With the “overlay” solution, the entire geographic region would be required to adopt a new method of “10-digit” dialing to complete local calls – even if the business or person was just next door. This could create confusion for businesses as well as confusion for residents, especially young people, trying to reach friends and family. There is also a concern that a sense of geographic identity associated with an area code would be lost. People often have an idea of where a business or individual is located by looking at the area code.

An area code “geographic split” would take the geographic region, currently served by the 918 area code, and split it into two separate geographic districts. One district would retain the 918 area code and the other district would be assigned a new area code. With the “split” solution “7-digit” local dialing would be retained within each area code, as it is dialed today. Customers in one district will have a new area code but their seven digit number would remain the same. Also, with a “split” the sense of geographic identity associated with an area code would not be lost.

Although the ALJ’s recommendation of an “all services distributed overlay” is very disappointing, City staff will continue to take a strong position for the geographic split of the 918 area code.

If local “7-digit” dialing and the sense of geographic identity within an area code is important to you then your support is needed. Contact the Corporation Commissioners today and urge them to select the geographic split option as their final decision.

Here is contact information for the Commissioners:

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