



**For Immediate Release
October 21, 2019**

ICC CONTACT: Victoria Crawford
Office: (217) 557-5819
Victoria.Crawford@Illinois.gov

Marianne Manko
Office: (217) 782-5793
Marianne.Manko@Illinois.gov

ICC Announces New 447 Area Code for 217 Region

Conservation efforts delayed implementation by 12 years, 447 prefixes coming in 2021

Springfield, IL...The Illinois Commerce Commission has announced a new area code is coming to central Illinois. The new 447 area code will “overlay” the existing 217 area code to address the depletion of prefixes available for assignment within the region. The first prefix in the new area code will not be introduced until after March 29, 2021.

The 217 area code covers 36 counties in Illinois and includes communities such as Springfield, Champaign, Urbana, Decatur, Danville, Quincy, and Rantoul. The 217 area code is one of the original, eighty-six area codes in the United States, assigned by Bell Laboratories in 1947. It has not undergone any substantive changes to its boundaries nor its dialing patterns since 1951.

447 Area Code, 18 Years in the Making

NeuStar (now Somos) under contract by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to administer the nation’s telephone numbering resources, originally filed a petition on behalf of the Illinois Telecommunications Industry seeking a new area code for 217 in June of 2001. On March 6, 2007, in Docket No. 01-0656, the ICC approved the addition of area code 447, to be deployed in the geographic area now served by area code 217. The Commission sought to delay implementation for as long as possible. Ongoing conservation efforts have forestalled the need for the new 447 area code until now.

While many individual 217 telephone numbers remain unassigned, an area code is deemed to be “exhausted” when the last available prefix has been assigned. While 447 telephone numbers will begin to appear in 2021, there will continue to be an ongoing supply of available 217 telephone numbers in most areas.

What Consumers Can Expect Upon Implementation

Current phone customers will retain the original area code. New telephone customers for local phone service, cellular, paging services, and alarms, assigned in the same area may receive telephone numbers in the new overlay area code.

The FCC requires all calls made in the overlay area to be completed by dialing the full, 10-digit number (area code + seven-digit number). This includes calls currently dialed with seven digits in the existing area code. This requirement does not affect the cost of the call. A local call will remain a local call, and a toll call will remain a toll call, regardless of the number of digits that are dialed to complete it.

Prior to the assignment of numbers in the new area code, customers in the 217 area code will have a six-month period time, between August 29, 2020 and February 27, 2021, to adjust to dialing the additional digits to complete their calls, prior to it becoming mandatory. During this period, consumers are encouraged to update their contact lists and auto dialers to include the 10-digit number. After February 27, 2021, all calls must be dialed with the Area Code + Telephone number.

####

About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

Follow the Illinois Commerce Commission on Twitter [@ILCommerceComm](#)