



NEWS RELEASE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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COMMISSION ORDERS AREA CODE CONSERVATION MEASURES

ATLANTA – The Public Service Commission has ordered several number conservation measures for the telecommunications industry to ensure efficient utilization of telephone numbers to prolong the life of the new area code 470 for the toll free metropolitan Atlanta area. The new area code is scheduled to go into effect by August 7, 2001.

An increase in competition in the local phone service market, the growing demand by the public for additional telephone numbers, and a technical requirement that currently allocates phone numbers in blocks of 10,000 has contributed to the need for a fourth area code in Metro Atlanta.

To conserve numbers in the new 470 area code, the Commission has directed that the telecommunications industry must use the first 1,000 block of 10,000 numbers in a dialing exchange before opening an additional block. A minimum of 60 percent of the numbers in a dialing exchange must be used before a new exchange can be opened. The rate of utilization will increase by five percent a year until it reaches 75 percent on June 30, 2004.

The state's growing economy has necessitated the addition of five new area codes in Georgia since 1995. Metro Atlanta's first area code, 404, was introduced in 1947 and stood alone until the addition of 770 in 1995. Then in 1998, 678 was added. In south Georgia, 912 stood alone until last year, when 229 and 478 were added to become effective August 1, 2001.

North Georgia will see a new area code implemented in the current 706 dialing area by the fourth quarter 2002. The area code number and geographic area it will cover have yet to be determined.

For further information you may view the Commission Website at www.psc.ga.state.us under the Telecom section.

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