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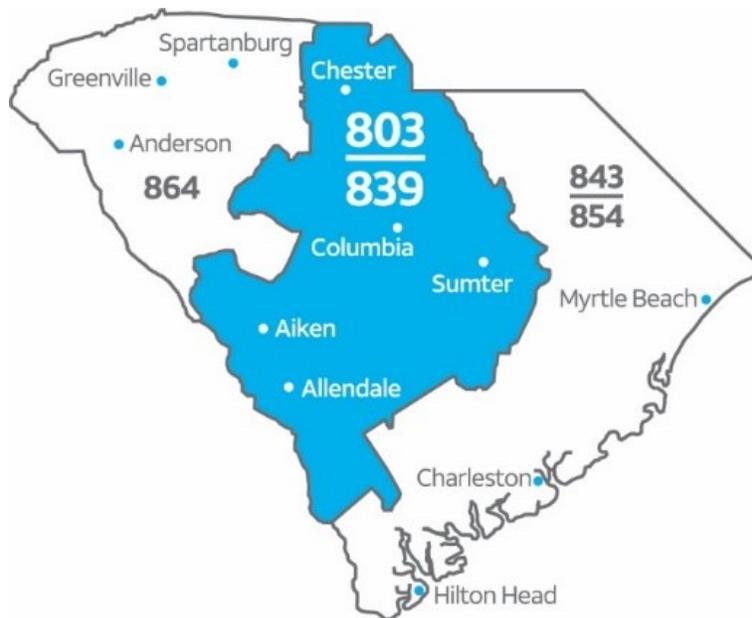
Jocelyn Boyd
Chief Clerk/Executive Director
Phone: (803) 896-5100
Fax: (803) 896-5246

Clerk’s Office
Phone: (803) 896-5100
Fax: (803) 896-5199

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Contact: Rob Bockman at 803.596.5142
April 28th, 2020

839 Area Code Overlay Goes Live in South Carolina in May



(Pictured: Map of the affected region. The entire area in blue, currently under the 803 area code, will have the overlay applied in May. At that point, consumers who apply for new numbers may receive a phone number with the 839 area code.)

In 2018, the Public Service Commission issued [Order No. 2018-498](#) approving the application of an area code overlay in the current 803 area code, noting “the company informed the PSC they would run out of new phone numbers before the end of 2020” and “absent numbering plan area relief, the supply of central office codes for the 803 numbering plan area will exhaust during the fourth quarter of 2020.” This overlay program was brought before the Commission by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator on behalf of the South Carolina Telecommunications Industry as [Docket No. 2018-35-C](#).

Beginning on May 26th, the 839 area code overlay will be added to the current 803 area code, which covers the central portion of South Carolina. This overlay will supplement the current 803 area code rather than replacing it, and will allow new numbers to be issued to people and businesses who apply for service within the region without disrupting current service. This program is similar to the 843/854 code split established in the Eastern third of the state.

Since last October, consumers have been encouraged by their service providers to dial the full ten digits when making phone calls. On April 25th, it became mandatory to dial ten digits when placing calls.

Consumers in this region should know the following crucial information about this new overlay:

- Current telephone numbers, including current area code, will not change. If a consumer currently has an 803 area code, that area code will remain unchanged.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the overlay.
- Current local calls will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed.
- Consumers will still dial just three digits to reach 911.
- If 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in consumers' communities, they will still dial these codes with just three digits.
- If consumers experience issues with dialing, they are encouraged to contact their phone service provider.

In addition to changing dialing procedures, consumers should be aware that all services, automatic dialing equipment, or other types of equipment that are currently programmed to dial a 7-digit number need to be reprogrammed to match the new dialing procedures. Some examples are life safety systems, stored telephone numbers in contact lists in phones, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, alarm and security systems or gates, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, etc. Consumers may also want to check your personal or business stationery and advertising materials to ensure the accurate area code is represented.

The timeline of the overlay is as follows:

As of **April 25, 2020**, consumers have begun using the mandatory ten-digit dialing procedures. On and after this date, if consumers do not use the new dialing procedures, calls will not be completed. A recorded message will instruct callers to hang up and dial again, beginning with the area code.

Beginning **May 26, 2020**, new telephone lines or services may be assigned numbers using the new 839 area code. Again, no current numbers will change as a result of this overlay.

For more information, please contact the Public Service Commission at 803.896.5100 or email robert.bockman@psc.sc.gov.

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