



“We Keep You Connected”

Area Code Dialing to Begin June 5

Beginning Saturday, June 5, people in the 256 area code will have to dial the area code for all calls. Ten-digit dialing will become mandatory with the addition of the new 938 area code for the region currently covered by 256. This includes most of northeast Alabama, including cities such as Huntsville, Gadsden and Anniston.

According to the Alabama Public Service Commission (APSC) the 256 area code will run out of prefixes (the three numbers between the area code and the last four digits of a phone number) in 2011, resulting in a need for a new area code.

Rather than forcing thousands of individuals and businesses to change their phone number, the APSC chose to overlay the new area code. With the overlay plan, new phone numbers assigned may have either the 256 or 938 area codes. People with current 256 area codes will not have to change to the new 938 area code.

“The only difference we will see with the arrival of the new 938 area code is that our members will have to include the area code when making all calls, both local and long distance,” said Farmers Telecommunications Cooperative General Manager Fred Johnson. “This will be an adjustment, but it is certainly better than having to change your phone number.”

Since both area codes will be used in the same region, it will be necessary to dial the area code plus the phone number even when making local calls. It will not be necessary to dial the ‘1’ before the area code; that will only be necessary when making a long distance call.

“This change will be necessary for all phones, including faxes, security systems, and alarm systems,” Johnson said. “You will need to update the contacts in your cell phone as well.”

Multi-line key and PBX systems, or any equipment with automatic dialing features need to be reprogrammed to include the area codes.

Special services such as 411, 611, and 911 will remain unchanged. If you use features such as call forward, speed dial, or call blocking, it will be necessary to reprogram those numbers to include the area code.

For more information please visit www.psc.state.al.us and click on “Changes in 256 Area Code”.