

## What makes up a Telephone Number?

**Area Code + Prefix + Line Number**  
111            555            1234

**Area Code:** A three digit number identifying the general geographic area in which a customer lives.

**Prefix:** A three digit number that denotes the switch within a telephone exchange to which a call should be routed.

**Line Number:** A four digit number that directs a call to an individual telephone line.



### How many area codes does Missouri have?

In the state of Missouri, there are six area codes: **314, 636, 816, 660, 573, and 417** (refer to map on front cover).

Each area code has about 7.9 million numbers. There are 792 prefixes or blocks of 10,000 numbers in each area code available for public use. Some numbers in the blocks of 10,000 are reserved for testing codes and special uses (i.e. telephone numbers with prefixes such as 911, 711, 411, etc.).

## Number Conservation Efforts

The Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) continues to explore ways to improve how telephone numbers are distributed. Some of these number conservation efforts are described as follows:

**Number Pooling:** This means assigning companies numbers in blocks of 1,000 instead of blocks of 10,000. Pooling has been implemented in all six of Missouri's area codes.

**Reclamation:** Under this practice, a company "returns" any unused numbers in its assigned block to the national pool of numbers. Once numbers are returned, they are available for use by another company.

**Sequential Number Assignment:** Telephone carriers are required to assign numbers within an already opened block of a thousand numbers, before opening another 1,000 number block.

**Utilization Threshold:** Telephone carriers are required to meet a utilization threshold (a certain percentage of a block of 1,000 numbers must be used before another block of 1,000 numbers is opened).

## Why are we running out of telephone numbers?

There are several reasons why existing numbers may run out in a geographic area. Some of those reasons include:

- An increase in telephone service providers;
- Utilization and management of number resources;
- Increasing demand for new services (internet, data, fax machines, cell phones);
- Introduction of new technologies such as wireless devices (cell phones, pagers);
- Increase in local telephone service customers.

### What are the exhaust dates for the six area codes? (these dates are subject to change)

573 - 2012	816 - 2016
417 - 2011	636 - 2029
314 - 2017	660 - 2017