

Ma Bell gets county ready for new 810 area code

Michigan Bell has launched a massive public information campaign with mailings designed to help 1.5 million homes and businesses adjust to the new area code that's coming that will affect Oakland County.

Customers will be able to use the new 810 area code starting Dec. 1, when it will be recognized nationally. During the transition, customers will be able to reach a telephone number in the 810 area code by dialing either 313 or 810. Starting Aug. 10, 1994, callers will only be able to reach numbers in the new area code by dialing 810.

Telephone customers in Oakland, Macomb, Lapeer, Genesee, St. Clair and Sanilac counties, as well as small portions of Saginaw, Shiawassee, Livingston, Washtenaw and Wayne counties, will receive the new 810 area code.

Nationwide, some 25 other metropolitan regions — including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco — have added area codes in recent years. Officials from these areas have stressed the need for extensive public education.

"We'll be talking about it plenty over the next 18 months," said Pamela Woodside, Michigan Bell customer relations manager. In addition to the customer mailings, the company later this year will roll out a print and broadcast campaign to remind area customers of the change. The mailings remind customers that a special information number has been established to answer their questions: 1-800-831-8899.

Some 300,000 businesses

throughout Michigan will receive a large package of printed materials that includes a checklist of action the firms can take to prepare for the new area code. "We are giving businesses the advance notice they'll need to prepare for this momentous change," said Woodside.

Businesses need to begin plan-

ning changes in stationery, packaging, labels and catalogs; programming for fax machines, modems and speed-call lists; and advertising and sales materials, Woodside advises.

The Bell mailing contains sample articles businesses can use for in-house newsletters and a sample memo for notifying employees

of the new 810 code. Letters also are going to about 1.5 million homes affected by the change.

The plan dividing the existing 313 area code was recommended by a special eight-member advisory committee appointed by local government leaders in the fall of 1991 to decide how best to add the new area code.

The panel's plan — publicly unveiled last July — establishes a boundary line for the new area code that runs roughly along Eight Mile Road, east to Lake St. Clair and west to the limits of the existing 313 area code.

Telephone customers in Washtenaw and Monroe counties, most of Wayne County and small por-

tions of Jackson, Livingston and Lenawee counties will retain the 313 area code.

The new area code will have no effect on telephone rates, said Woodside.

The additional area code is needed because southeastern Michigan is running out of numbers, Michigan Bell says.

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Eight Mile

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an old friend and ally, the Southfield mayor said. But Fracassi said he didn't necessarily like what he heard.

"He (Grubbs) said the policies of the previous administration are not necessarily the policies of the new administration," Fracassi said.

The old administration, of course, was that of Daniel T. Murphy who strongly supported cooperative efforts such as the task force for Eight Mile Road. Murphy had, for example, assigned Deborah Kay Schutt, of the county planning division, to the task force on an as-needed basis. She was, in fact, the only available staff person.

But under Patterson, Schutt was quietly reassigned, without any explanatory note. The seemingly abrupt transfer — with no supplementary information — gave rise to more fears.

In the absence of trustworthy information, friends and critics turned to speculation. What are Patterson's intentions?

County commissioner Lillian Jaffe Oaks, D-Southfield, said it was a matter of missed communication. "I'm sure the county will support revitalization of Eight Mile."

Another county commissioner, David L. Moffitt, R-Farmington Hills, said he can see Patterson having misgivings about any Eight Mile Road authority. "It's a lofty goal," he said. "But a lot depends on how it is funded."

Commissioner Donn Wolf, also a Farmington Hills Republican, said he, for one, wouldn't want the authority "to become another layer of government that can impose taxes. I haven't talked with Brooks. But if that's his concern, I share it."

Commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield, said he does not believe Patterson would back off his campaign pledge to rejuvenate Eight Mile Road and other southern portions of the county. "But I think he caused some concern when he took Debby (Schutt) away and assigned Jean Chamberlain to the task force."

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The Oakland County Board of Commissioners is expected to act soon on a proposed full management contract with the Michigan Department of Mental Health. Under full management, all state mental health funds for Oakland County will be turned over to local control of the county.

The current mental health system has failed to meet the needs of many of its citizens who have serious mental illness. Their quality of life suffers because the community services they need are either not available or inappropriate.

Dr. Leonard Stein, of the University of Wisconsin, a pioneer and national expert in community mental health described the Oakland County system as a "fragmented non-system of care."

FULL MANAGEMENT will enable the county to eliminate the waste and inappropriate use of millions of dollars of mental health funds by combining two separate systems (the state and the county) into one.

FULL MANAGEMENT will result in more and better community services and a dramatic reduction of hospital usage. For the first time, under full management the county will be able to rationally plan a unified and integrated system of care to meet the treatment needs of each seriously mentally ill adult.

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FULL MANAGEMENT is supported by most advocacy groups which speak for consumers and their family members. They have firsthand experience with the failures of the present system and know what needs to be done.

FULL MANAGEMENT was voted unanimously by the Oakland County Community Mental Health Board of Directors.

*Approximately 10,000 residents

The three commission members on the Community Mental Health Board have warned that if full management is not adopted, the state and the CMH Board will drastically cut services this year.

Fifty-three of the fifty-five counties in Michigan already have full management contracts.

It is time for Oakland County to act!

Urge your Commissioner to vote for full management. For the name and address of your Commissioner, call (313) 858-0100.

Board of Directors • Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Oakland County, P.O. Box 515, Birmingham, MI 48012

Full management is endorsed by the following organizations:

The Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Oakland County, The Oakland County Council for Children and Adults with Psychiatric Disabilities, ARC (which advocates for the developmentally disabled), Regional Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on the Developmentally Disabled (a coalition of groups), United Cerebral Palsy of Metropolitan Detroit, Training & Treatment Innovations

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