

10-digit local dialing is quickly becoming the norm across North America

Ontario and Québec are following suit

The ever-growing popularity of wireless devices and Internet services is driving a huge increase in the demand for new phone numbers. To meet this demand, many regions across Canada and the United States are adopting 10-digit dialing — the area code followed by the 7-digit phone number — for all local calls. This dialing method, which, to all appearances, will soon be the standard across North America, allows for the introduction of new area codes, thus creating millions of new phone numbers. In 2006, many residents and businesses in Ontario and Québec will have to make the switch to 10-digit local dialing. And they should start preparing for these changes now.

Given the speed at which telecommunications services have developed over the last few years, it is not surprising that many area codes will soon reach their full capacity. Such is the case of area code 519, serving south-western Ontario, and area code 514, which covers the Island of Montréal. In 2006, a new area code will be added to each of these regions.

Adding a new area code to a geographic area served by an existing code requires changes in local dialing habits. Since the same phone number can now exist in both area codes, 10-digit local dialing — the area code followed by the seven-digit phone number — becomes mandatory in order for local calls to be connected and reach their appropriate destinations.

Other regions of Ontario and Québec will also make the transition to 10-digit dialing in 2006, without any new area codes having to be added to those regions in the short term: the territories served by area code 613 in eastern Ontario, 450 in Montréal's surrounding regions, and 819 in western, northern and central Québec, will all see the introduction of 10-digit dialing next year.

Several other major North American cities, including Toronto, Vancouver, Boston, Miami and Philadelphia, among others, have already successfully adopted 10-digit local dialing.

Start getting ready now

All of this sounds pretty simple: just remember to always dial the area code followed by the phone number for all local calls. And



Johanne Lemay
Telecommunications analyst

“Businesses should reprogram their telecommunications equipment, update their databases and ensure that their 10-digit phone numbers appear on all administrative and marketing documents.”

though it is simple, it does require the reprogramming of telecommunications equipment and functions to comply with 10-digit local dialing.

Businesses are responsible for reprogramming their equipment, systems, and telephone functions — such as auto-dialing, speed dialing and call forwarding — so as to ensure the area code is included in all local communications.

On June 17, 2006, 10-digit local dialing will be adopted by Ontario's 519 and 613 regions, and Québec's 450, 514, and 819

regions. Businesses should reprogram their equipment before this date to avoid any possible disruptions in data transmission.

Johanne Lemay, telecommunications analyst and spokesperson for the Telecommunications Alliance, advises companies using multiple systems and equipment to begin reprogramming them now. They should also make sure their employee, client, partner and supplier databases are updated and that their area code appears on all administrative (invoices, stationery, etc.) and marketing documents (brochures, web sites, directories, company vehicles, etc.).

For more information, visit the web site of the Telecommunications Alliance — whose members include Bell, Rogers, TELUS,

Fido, Télébec, Sprint Canada, Allstream and Vidéotron — at www.dial10.ca. There you will find a comprehensive checklist that provides guidelines as you make the necessary changes to comply with 10-digit dialing.

Key date

Ontario 519 and 613

June 17, 2006

Québec 450, 514 and 819

Affected regions

New area codes in the 519 and 514 regions

In 2006, two new area codes will be added to the existing codes in the 519 and 514 regions, thus creating millions of new phone numbers, enough to meet the demand for many years to come. The 226 area code will cover the same territory as the 519 code, and the 438 area code, the 514 territory. This measure has no impact on existing phone numbers.

The 613 and 819 regions

In the Ottawa-Gatineau calling area, dialing the area code is not currently required when making local calls. Introducing 10-digit dialing for all local communications between Ottawa and Gatineau will make it possible for the same seven-digit telephone number to exist in

both area codes, thus freeing up thousands of numbers and meeting the short-term demand. It is important to note that this new dialing method applies to the entire territory covered by these two area codes.

The 450 region

In the 450 region, which covers Montréal's surrounding areas, introducing 10-digit dialing for all local calls in the region — a dialing method already used for local calls between the 450 and 514 area codes — will provide a uniform dialing pattern across the 450 region and its neighbouring areas. It is important to note that this new local dialing method applies to the entire territory served by the 450 area code.