

State officials say 502 area code rapidly running out of numbers

BY PETER W. ZUBATY
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

BARDSTOWN, Ky. — The 502 area code is rapidly running out of numbers, perhaps as soon as late 2027. J.E.B. Pinney, with the Kentucky Public Service Commission, was on hand recently at the Old Courthouse in Bardstown for the first of five public meetings — including a June 16 meeting in Carrollton — designed to inform residents of the situation with the 502 area code eventually exhausting its supply of numbers, and what the preferred options are to address that.

“This is the one that’s imminent,” Pinney said, largely because of population and business growth within the existing 502 area code. Other area codes in Kentucky will take several years to fill up.

The action is required so as to have a plan in place for when those numbers do run out. Pinney said the North American Numbering Plan (NANPA) — an independent organization that tracks the telephone numbers in use and available in the U.S. and other countries — needs to have Kentucky’s option in place and submitted by the PSC by July 31 of this year.

Other meetings are set for Georgetown (June 3),

Louisville (June 5). Carrollton (June 16) and Frankfort (June 17). The meeting in Carrollton will be held from 5-8 p.m. on Monday, June 16 at the Carroll County Courthouse Fiscal Court Room in Carrollton.

“We want to hear from the telecommunications industry, from businesses that might be affected by the change, and from area code 502 residents,” PSC Chair Angie Hatton said in a press release. “We seek public input so that we will have a full understanding of the issues before we make a decision that may have a significant impact on the economy and on people’s daily lives.”

New area codes can be established in one of two ways: geographic split or overlay. Until the last new area code implementation, the geographic split has been the norm in Kentucky. However, a new area code also can be created as an “overlay” on an existing area code which utilizes a new area code on all new numbers in an existing geographic area. This option then requires 10-digit dialing for local calls.

The last geographic split of an area code anywhere was in 2007. In Kentucky, the 270 area code was split away from 502 in 1999, and the 859 area code was split away from 606, also in 1999.

IMPACT ON CARROLL, TRIMBLE

The 502 area code in Kentucky is rapidly running out of numbers and one option being considered is a geographic split with Jefferson, Oldham, Trimble and Carroll counties remaining in the 502 area, while the rest of the region including Henry, Owen, Shelby, Franklin, Anderson, Scott, Nelson and Bullitt counties receiving a new area code. The Kentucky Public Service Commission has reserved the Carroll County Fiscal Court Room in Carrollton for a public meeting on the 502 area code from 5-8 p.m. on Monday, June 16, at the Carroll County Courthouse.

That’s why the first option seems to be the best choice, not just from the PSC standpoint, but also from the thoughts of those who commented at Monday’s meeting. The second option, a full geographic split, would lead to businesses and residents and other phone users having to get a new area code.

“This is the best, simplest option,” Nelson County Judge-Executive Tim Hutchins said of the Option 1 overlay. “You wouldn’t have to change everybody’s numbers.”

Pinney confirmed, saying, “If you have a 502 number, you would keep it.”

Once the available 502 numbers are used up in the Option 1 overlay, a new area code would be completed within those boundaries and new numbers would be assigned the new area code. What that area code would be is not known as of yet, but it would be a similar

situation to the 270 area code, which has a 364 overlay within its boundaries.

In a geographic split, Jefferson, Oldham, Trimble and Carroll counties would remain in 502, while the rest of the region, such as Nelson, Bullitt, Shelby, Henry, Owen, Anderson, Scott and Franklin counties would receive a new area code. Pinney noted that if this option, Option 2, was chosen, folks could still dial numbers with just seven digits.

Other options include (all would require 10-digit calling):

- Combining 502 with 270/364
- Eliminating area code boundaries
- Eliminate boundaries and overlay.

Debra Bohachevsky was in attendance along with several other residents, all of whom agreed that the Option 1 overlay is the preferred one.

“If they choose this option, it won’t affect a lot of people,” she said. “... It’s really the new people it would affect.”

Pinney noted that businesses and colleges would be affected the most; he said hospitals, call centers and other large organizations often want to have consecutive blocks of numbers for their telecom systems.

“The preferred option — that’s why it’s called the preferred option — is the best option,” said State Sen. Jimmy Higdon, who recalled the headaches in 1999 when the 270 area code was split off 502, which affected businesses and residents in Marion County, where he lives. “That’s why it hasn’t been done in years, because it creates a lot of problems. We want the preferred option. We want to keep 502.”

Brad Metcalf, who heads up Nelson County’s Emergency Management Agency, agreed, noting that changing area codes would cause problems for emer-

gency service organizations. Some in the crowd suggested that they make sure that whatever the new area code is that is overlaid with 502 is, that it’s not similar to 502 in any way, such as 503.

Bonnie Waters, who has returned from Kentucky after living several years in Oregon, said that won’t be an issue. She still has her old Oregon cell phone number, and that area code is 503. She is in support of Option 1, to make it easier for businesses and other organizations.

“It’s signage, it’s stationary, it’s websites, it’s all of it, and all of their state filings where they’re registered,” she said. “For a small business, that is a lot of stuff.”

Scott Wantland, with Wantland Law PLLC in Shepherdsville, can sympathize. He spoke Monday and told the crowd that changing area codes would be “economically devastating to me.”

Residents and business owners can attend any of the public forums and register their thoughts on which option they prefer, or online at [psc.ky.gov](https://psc.ky.gov/ViewCaseFilings/2024-00333).

Documents in the 502 area code case can be found on the PSC Web site. The case number is 2024-00333. <https://psc.ky.gov/ViewCaseFilings/2024-00333>.



Lloyd Green via AP
Thomas, a golden retriever mix, lies on a bed in Westchester County, New York, on July 7, 2024.

Should you let pets sleep next to you? (Does it even matter what the experts say?)

BY ALBERT STUMM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

It turns out, our furry best friend might be our sleep enemy. Lots of pet owners let their animals sleep on the bed with them, which usually disrupts sleep. But many would say it’s worth it.

And researchers don’t necessarily disagree.

Melissa Milanak, a professor at Medical University of South Carolina specializing in sleep health, said most people at her clinic say their pets disturb them often at night.

found sleeping with pets was associated with poor sleep, “particularly those dimensions of sleep quality and insomnia symptoms.” That’s even accounting for the fact that pet owners may be less inclined to report problems in a survey because they don’t believe their beloved pets cause problems.

“I hate to even admit that my cat disrupts my sleep at all,” said Chin, who has one cat that keeps him awake and another that leaves him alone.

Moreover, a higher number of pets was associated with higher sleep disruption, he said.

“You can’t say that hands down, it’s bad for every single person, but there is a lot out there saying it negatively impacts your sleep,” she said.

Generally speaking, having a pet is good for many people’s health. Pets have been shown to lower their humans’ stress levels, get them to exercise and more. Many pet owners also say they feel an immeasurable amount of comfort by having their pets close as they sleep.

But dogs’ and cats’ natural sleep cycles aren’t the same as those of humans.

Dogs tend to be light sleepers and wake up multiple times at night. Some display instinctual behavior like scratching at bedding, which can prevent deeper phases of sleep even if it doesn’t wake you up.

As many cat owners know, “the zoomies” often happen before they are ready to get out of bed. Cats evolved to hunt in low light, meaning they are particularly active at dusk and dawn.

Milanak also said allergens such as pet dander and microbes brought into the house can affect owners’ breathing, preventing them from getting enough deep sleep.

Brian Chin, a professor of social and health psychology at Trinity College in Connecticut, said his research has

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT IT?

It’s not as simple as telling pet owners that they shouldn’t share the bed, Milanak said. For a lot of people, it becomes part of their sleep routine, which makes it difficult to sleep without it because they have come to associate pets with sleep.

Because the topic is sensitive, Milanak asks new patients several questions before getting to whether they sleep with a pet. If they’re waking up multiple times a night, for example, they may not realize why. Once the association is made, she then asks whether they are open to not sleeping together.

“It’s like if I said to somebody, you need to stop smoking,” she said. “They’re going to give me all the reasons why they want to continue smoking.”

The first, most obvious solution is putting a dog bed on the floor in the bedroom, or locking the cat out of the room at night. For those who insist on having the pet in bed with them, she advises washing the sheets more frequently and perhaps adjusting their sleep schedule to match their pet’s routine.

“Maybe you need to go to bed earlier so you can get up earlier to accommodate the pet,” she said.

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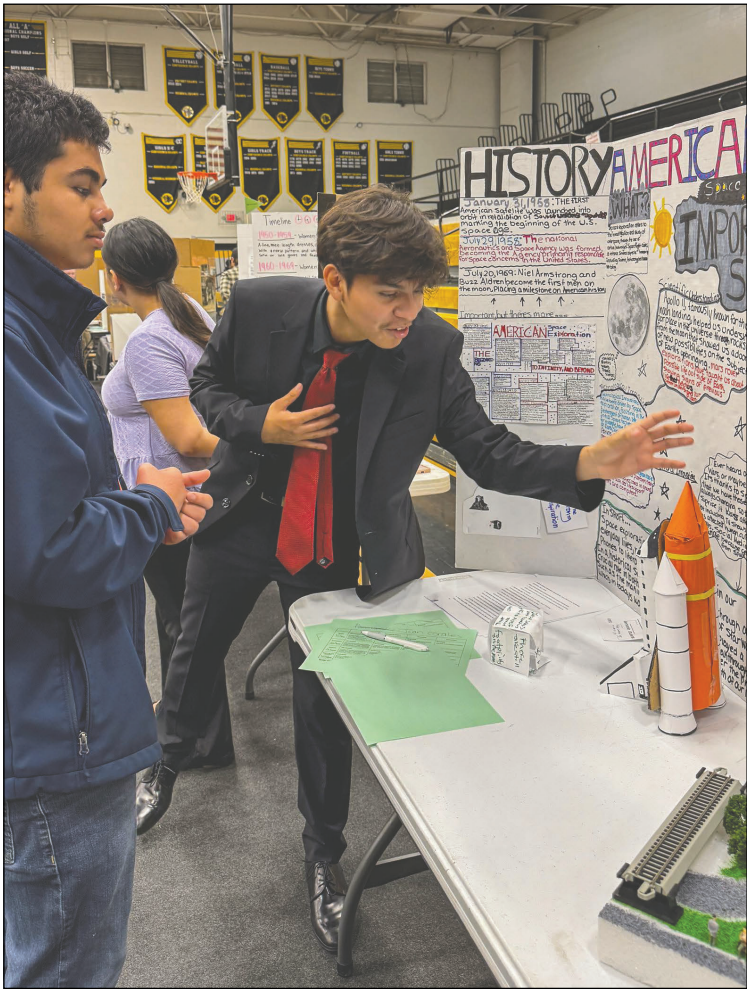
Carlos Sanchez explored video games, balancing the fun with the facts. “It’s a double-edged sword,” he said. “Games can help you think faster or get addicted. It depends on the person.” His display showed the evolution from Pac-Man to modern titles, as well as the potential benefits and risks.

For many students, the freedom to choose their own topic was the key to their success. “If Martin had given me a topic, I don’t know if I would’ve put in the same effort,” Brayden admitted. Micah agreed, saying, “I’m glad he let us choose. It taught us a lot, and we got to teach others, too.”

Ethan summed it up best: “This should be a yearly thing. As long as you pick something you’re interested in, you can’t really go wrong.”

Jennifer Willhoite

Bernardo Gutierrez (right) speaking to Macario Tomas on his history showcase topic concerning the space program.



Jennifer Willhoite

2025

Shelby Energy Cooperative
Annual Meeting and
Member Appreciation Day
THURSDAY, JUNE 19

Drive-thru
Registration: 8 a.m.–2 p.m.
Virtual Business Meeting: 2:30 p.m.
Livestreamed on Facebook

Drive-thru registration with buckets and bulbs at three locations:

- **Henry County Fairgrounds**
1106 Castle Hwy, Eminence, KY 40019
- **Trimble County Fairgrounds**
3114 US-421, Bedford, KY 40006
- **Shelby County Fairgrounds**
1513 Midland Trail, Shelbyville, KY 40065

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