

Maryland Office of People's Counsel
ALERT
Update on Verizon's Copper Retirement Plans

February 2017

The Maryland Office of People's Counsel (OPC), the Staff of the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) and Verizon reached an agreement on February 1, 2017 on Verizon's notices regarding its current copper telephone service retirement/migration plans in Maryland.

Verizon is authorized by the Federal Communications Commission to migrate current copper telephone service customers to its fiber network.

If you received a notice saying that your copper phone service would be suspended on December 14, 2016, please know that Verizon will be sending you new notices starting on or around February 16, 2017. Attached to those notices will be revised FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) that more clearly explain the process and its ramifications. As the notices state, you will have to take action by April 4, 2017 to either have your copper telephone service migrated to Verizon's fiber phone service or another provider. You do not have to have the actual appointment before April 4, but you will have to contact Verizon by that date. Customers that fail to do so will face suspension of their telephone service.

If you received only one letter from Verizon, advising that your copper landline phone service will be retired sometime before September 2017, then you will most likely be receiving a second letter in the next few months advising of the date by which you must take action.

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If you have copper telephone service, and live in an area in which fiber/FiOS is available, but have NOT received any letters from Verizon, then your migration date has yet to be established. We are working with Verizon to keep you apprised of upcoming dates.

As Verizon's updated FAQs point out:

- "FiOS" is not the same as Verizon's regulated fiber voice. Verizon's FiOS Digital Voice is not regulated by the Maryland PSC.
- If you switch from regulated copper voice to regulated fiber voice, with no other service changes, there should be no change on your monthly bill.
- You are under no obligation to purchase additional FiOS services, such as TV or Internet. If you have a Verizon DSL Internet line, you will have to find a new Internet service provider or inquire about Verizon's Internet service.
- Verizon's fiber voice service does not work in the event of a power outage and Verizon will provide you with a back-up battery at the time of installation. This will only work for X hours without recharging.
- If you have a question or complaint about how the transition is handled, you should contact Verizon at 1 (800) 837-4966. If you are not satisfied with the response, you can make a complaint to the Public Service Commission at 1-800-492-0474 or www.psc.state.md.us. You can also contact our office, as listed below

General questions? Please send an e-mail to us at DLInfo OPC@maryland.gov, or call 410-767-8150 (1-800-207-4055).

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