

From Wireless Action:

### **AT&T Action Kit**

**American Telephone & Telegraph Corporation** has reneged on its promise to wait until 2020 before beginning its dismantling of PSTN landlines. Many AT&T customers are now receiving [this change in service notice](#). There is much discussion about the meaning, scope, timing and implementation of the notice AT&T customers are receiving. Basically, it says that unless you call and cancel your service with them in within 30 days, you automatically agree to allow them to install new network equipment on your property, which includes co-locating antennas, and that you agree to pay all the electric charges for this new network equipment. They are trying to expand their network using our real estate and have us pay to waste electricity broadcasting microwaves 24/7. Basically, everyone is agreeing to this change unless they call and cancel their phone service within 30 days. Opt-in by default again. Most don't even realize that this could potentially be the end of their actual 'landline'. Currently, AT&T is saying that the ONLY other option is to cancel your service with them, which is hardly an option in service areas where they remain a RBOC/landline monopoly. **If/when** you pay your AT&T bills, pay **using a check** and write "Paid under protest" on the memo line. Do not allow AT&T to install any new equipment on your property without full disclosure of what it is, what it does, and how it differs from your current service. Get a signed confirmation from anyone who trespasses to do this work that they have accomplished the requests you made of them (prepare a sheet ahead of time if you are under threat of forced installation just like Smart Meter installs.) So far, Bettye J. Saxon from AT&T External Affairs, has clarified that *"First, to be clear, we continue to sell and support traditional home phone service for our customers. We are not cancelling anyone's service. We sent traditional home phone customers a message with their bill to inform them of a change to their Residential Service Agreement that allows us to upgrade their network while continuing to provide home phone service. This does not indicate any change to the customer's actual service or that AT&T is canceling the customer's service. The update to the service agreement only applies in situations where we are upgrading the customer's service by providing new network facilities and need access to the customer's property to install equipment. Customers will be given advanced notice before any such service upgrades... We are not taking away anyone's landline, the new services that we are referring to happens to be services like (GigaPower) Fiber to the Home and Broadband delivered wirelessly. Both types of services have to be ordered by the customer."* However, what another spokesperson said that *unequivocally, that "the notice" does, indeed, mean that we would be losing our landline and getting VoIP and that if we aren't happy with that we can take our business elsewhere, to a company that is providing landline service.* Make it clear in your letters and calls of protests that you object to the end of analog, copper landlines, and that you do not consent to any wireless antennas, devices, or appliances on your property. And if AT&T is not letting you keep your (or get a) landline, pass on what their External Affairs spokesperson said the 15th of June (above). Voice your opposition to any termination to analog, copper landline service.

**Why does this matter?** Some new customers have already been denied landlines, and AT&T pushed U-verse on them as the only option, which requires equipment to be installed on the house, just as they're describing in this service notice. They then end up with a VoIP phone that is digital and requires internet access and electricity. **This is the beginning of the dismantling of our analog landlines.** We know that AT&T has been begging the FCC to let it happen for many years, and is targeting 2020. But this process has already been underway for a very long time. In some places it's already a done deal. It's going on now, and there's not much more time to fight back and prevent this from happening. AT&T will start threatening our phone service if we don't comply with the installation of electrical equipment on our homes that will begin to 'migrate' us from analog to digital. **By law**, AT&T cannot disconnect someone's copper service. They have not been authorized by law to do that. AT&T can't switch out the network, and they can't disconnect copper and put in fiber. **However**, the notice bypasses any regulatory approval and states that a customer, by paying their bill, allows AT&T to do anything they want. If AT&T is allowed to discontinue the analog local loop, effectively eliminating your landline, you will no longer have dependable, reliable, common-battery telephone service. VoIP is currently unregulated, and [AT&T is fighting to make sure that it stays that way.](#)

AT&T



AT&T has notified customers throughout California that they must accept a revised service agreement requiring the purchase new equipment and services, under threat of disconnection. TURN is alerting customers that both the notice and the agreement itself can be misleading. Worried consumers have asked whether AT&T could cancel or disconnect their basic voice service if they do not agree to the changes. Such a notice would not be legal. Customers have also described being pressured by service reps to give up basic service and switch to newer technologies and bundled service. The CPUC is requiring AT&T to send out a revised notice. That's thanks to the public calling and complaining to the CPUC and legislators, and people taking this issue to legislators in Sacramento. Only time will tell on how much "clarification" the notice provides. Since AT&T is determined to eliminate copperline phone service, this will only be a temporary tiny setback for AT&T unless there is significant and continued public pressure.

This issue **MUST be addressed ASAP by everyone**, even if you don't have landline phone service from AT&T! Landline deregulation is already a HUGE problem -- check out the map below:



1. Call the CPUC to ask what this notice means and lodge a complaint: Public Advisor's Office -- (415) 703-2074 (*At the recording, don't select any of the options. There will be silence at the end and then you will be transferred to a person. Ask them how to file a formal complaint\*.*) Their office MUST receive many, many calls! When you call you MUST be persistent about filing a formal complaint! Demand that the PUC representative takes down your name, telephone number, and request to file a formal complaint. You must be persistent! Demand that the CPUC defend our rights!
2. Call the CPUC Consumer Affairs Branch -- 1 (800) 649-7570. They will take your information and can explain about filing a complaint and the process.
3. Write a formal letter of protest\* (especially if you are one of their landline subscribers) to AT&T showing you paid for service beyond 30 days under duress of losing telephone service and immediately objected to the new terms.
4. Complain to AT&T general customer support by telephone and complain: 1 (800) 331-0500
5. Call AT&T's landline support number and complain: 1 (800) 288-2020. Ask for a center manager and let them know you object to the loss of your landline\*\*. Get the location and employee ID number of the person you spoke with and their name, too, if they will supply it.
6. File an [informal complaint](#) with the Consumer Affairs Branch. Include a copy of your account number, a copy of the change of residential service notice, and any correspondence with AT&T. Explain it in your complaint letter\*\*.

7. File a [formal complaint](#) with your PUC/PSC about AT&T's residential service agreement changes in your state ASAP. *In a formal complaint, you have to show how you have been harmed.* When you file a complaint\*\*, email TURN (see next step) that you have done so, summarizing for them the complaint, so that they can add to their list. They are considering filing a complaint themselves. You can also file a complaint through TURN's website. Give them permission to being added to their complaint and provide your phone number to them. You can put TURN's name down as a referring agency when you file a formal complaint, as this adds weight to your complaint. Complaints by mail can be directed to (CPUC Consumer Affairs Formal Complaints 505 So. Van Ness San Francisco, CA 94102) and complaints by telephone can be directed to the non-toll-free number (415) 703-2074, #1, 2, 1, 4, 0 to get to a person that you can complain to. See link for toll-free number. [Click here to file a formal complaint](#).
8. Email the Utility Reform Network (TURN) [amontez@turn.org](mailto:amontez@turn.org) -- California residents only. Let them know you filed a complaint at the CPUC and briefly describe what you said in the complaint\*\*. They investigate trends. The more people they hear from, the bigger the issue for them. If you have questions or AT&T is not servicing your copper landline, call them at (415) 929-8876.
9. Contact Commissioner Clifford Rechtschaffen: (415) 703-1840.
10. Contact Commissioner Martha Guzman Aceves: (415) 703-2971
11. Contact Commissioner Carla Peterman
12. Contact Commissioner President Picker: (415) 703-2444, who is interested in emergency services.
13. Contact Commissioner Liane Randolph: (415) 703-2156.
14. Contact your congressional reps and Senators. Send them a copy of the complaint or summarize your complaint, and ask for their help. Ask for a freeze on this policy, an investigation, and public hearings on customer needs and copperline landlines.
15. Show up at the regularly scheduled CPUC business meetings\* and speak out! We can speak in open comments before the scheduled agenda.
16. Telephone your local radio station (using your landline)! Write editorials\*\*\* to your local newspaper! See [this article that was recently published](#) in the Monterey Herald.
17. Call your state and federal elected officials, using [the information in this document](#).
18. Attend city council and board of supervisor/county officials meetings; attend any and all in neighboring communities and counties. The public and elected officials don't know about these proposals. Please inform in person as many of these municipal governments as possible. Since many of these meetings are televised, the message goes to a wider audience.
19. Is your neighborhood on [NextDoor.com](#)? Are you? If the answer to both of those questions is yes, use it! Post questions like "Does anyone here object to cell towers in the neighborhood?". Share information about local protests against cellular towers and alert neighbors as to how they can get involved to save their landlines and fight 5G. Be prepared to respond to a lot of not-so-nice feedback. So, in order to be credible, make sure what you post can be well-cited, especially if you post in the Silicon Valley areas.

**\*Upcoming CPUC Business Meetings (All in San Francisco)**

- Thursday, July 13th
- Thursday, August 10th
- Thursday, August 24th
- Thursday, September 14th

**\*\*Here are some points to include on the telephone and in your complaint:**

- Request that the CPUC holds a hearing on this change
- Request that this change is put on hold until there is a hearing and public discussion
- There is no provision or opt-out or willingness to serve the EMF-disabled – no reasonable accommodation [rep said I could cancel my service if I didn't agree]
- *If you are homebound or disabled or depend on your landline for emergency services access and do NOT have an option for 'disconnected' service*
- *If you have unreliable access to mains power*
- Impossible deadline for the consumer to make any changes -- 30 days or July 1
- No public discussion of this service agreement change – AT&T seems to be moving ahead of regulatory approval
- Access to emergency services are often most essential when there is no power
- Changes from copperline service to wireless or with new electric connections could worsen disabling health effects for the EMF-disabled, including the installation on neighboring buildings, homes, or units.
- Inadequate method of alerting public – a little insert in the monthly bill
- Vague open-ended change – whatever AT&T wants to do or install on our homes is agreed to -- AT&T proposals since 2009 are that they want to discontinue copperline exchange landline service
- Costly and inconvenient for the public
- Some people have had the same phone number for decades – hugely inconvenient and disruptive to set up and to notify people as well as costly if they were to change
- May have to purchase new equipment to switch to another system
- Will have to find a new service provider if they don't agree with AT&T.
- Energy intensive
- Consumer cost of electricity for new systems.
- There is no 911 or emergency service or telephone service with VoIP or digital service in power outages. Copperline landlines normally work in a power outage and provide 911 and all other phone needs.
- Notice is misleading, threatening, and coercing. Changes have not been approved by the CPUC. AT&T is asking for a blank check with this notice. We do not consent.
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**\*\*\*California Newspaper Contact Information: Editorials/Letters to the Editor**

These are not all the newspapers in California, but some of the regional ones. Keep your letters at 150 words max; newspapers may edit them. The shorter it is, the better chance of being published. If you are sending your letter to an email address, include your full name, mailing address, city of residence, landline telephone number, and email address. See [www.scientists4wiredtech.com](http://www.scientists4wiredtech.com) if you want talking points on SB 649.

- [Sacramento Bee](#)
- [SF Chronicle](#)
- [LA Times](#)
- [Orange County Register](#) - Send letters to [letters@ocregister.com](mailto:letters@ocregister.com)
- [Redding Record-Searchlight](#) - Send letters (50 words or less) to [letters@redding.com](mailto:letters@redding.com)
- Santa Rosa Press Democrat - Send letters to [Letters@pressdemocrat.com](mailto:Letters@pressdemocrat.com)
- [Marin Independent Journal](#) - Send letters to [opinion@marinij.com](mailto:opinion@marinij.com) ("We do not publish form letters, "open" letters, petitions, individual consumer complaints or letters published elsewhere." -- True of most newspapers; original letters are always better)
- [San Jose Mercury](#) - Send letters to [mnletters@mercurynews.com](mailto:mnletters@mercurynews.com)
- [Fresno Bee](#)
- [Ventura County Star](#) - Send letters to [letters@vcstar.com](mailto:letters@vcstar.com)
- [Santa Barbara News Press](#) - Send letters to [voices@newspress.com](mailto:voices@newspress.com)
- PA Daily Post - Send letters to [letters@padailypost.com](mailto:letters@padailypost.com)
- [SM Daily Journal](#)