

# Copper Retirement Bulletin: What to Know About Recent FCC Announcements and Rapid Escalation of Carrier Notices

MARCH 2026

## Get Ahead of Service Disruptions

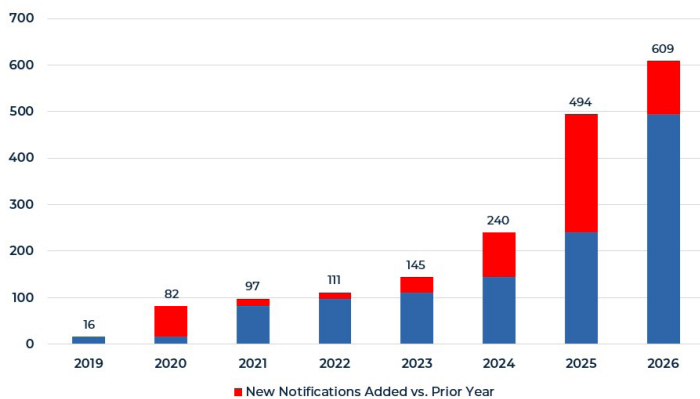
### Recent FCC Announcements

The FCC issued four orders and a separate NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rule Making) announcing measures to expedite the transition from aging copper telephone lines to modern, high-speed network infrastructures. These actions help to reduce regulatory barriers and enable telecommunications providers to decommission services faster.



### Rapid Escalation of ILEC Notifications

#### AT&T's Copper Retirement Notices



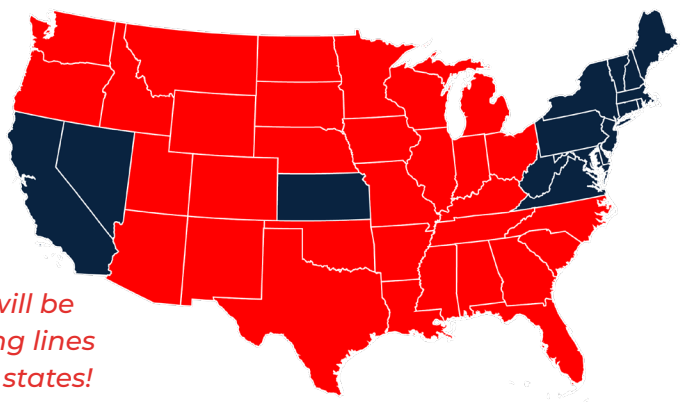
115 copper retirement notices received since January 1, 2026.

### States Impacted

**AT&T:** effective October 15, 2025 **ALL** wire centers across 18 states will be grandfathered

**Lumen:** issued a grandfathering notice across 14 states

*This means no orders for new voice and specialty lines will be accepted after these dates. Additionally, rates for existing lines are skyrocketing to more than \$2,700 per line in certain states!*



● USA TODAY

**AT&T to eliminate copper wire phone lines to most users. Who stands to lose?**



Volume of notices from carriers spanning service changes to rate increases has skyrocketed in 2025 with more expected.

Additionally, as of June 30, 2025 AT&T sent formal notification of permanent service discontinuance in select wire centers in the following states: AL, AR, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MI, MO, MS, NC, OH, OK, SC, TN, TX, and WI.



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## Key Implications

- Support for these central offices will diminish over time and repairs will be increasingly more difficult, which could result in service disruptions.
- Rates for these lines have steadily increased over the past decade and this is expected to continue.
- AT&T will begin discontinuance of its POTS lines starting June 2026.
- Once a full copper retirement notice is issued, customers will only have 180 days to move to an alternative solution.
- Providers looking to decommission voice services will no longer need to offer stand-alone voice options – a bundled option if sufficient.
- Copper retirement affects not only voice lines, but business-critical and safety-critical systems.
- Without functioning emergency lines, businesses will not be granted a Certificate of Occupancy, meaning they may be shuttered until they are back online, or pay for Fire Marshals to be onsite at an average rate of \$200 per hour or more until connectivity is restored.
- The demand for copper replacement products will begin to surge.

## How to Prepare for Copper Decommissioning

- Understand your copper-based services and pay close attention to safety-critical and business-critical specialty lines.
  - Fire panels, Elevators, Security Systems, Fax machines, Point-of-Sale devices, etc.
- Identify the products and service providers for your safety-critical and business-critical systems. This is crucial because most copper replacement solutions have limitations when it comes to system compatibility. When in doubt, contact MetTel.
- Plan ample time for a transition to digital solutions which can be affected by increased demand.



## MetTel's Future-Ready Solutions

MetTel delivers a turnkey solution for upgrading your traditional POTS lines to PIAB. Our proprietary solution is compatible with the broadest range of legacy telecom and safety/security equipment with the ability to be configured to unique systems. Plus, it has built in network and power redundancy to keep your systems online.

- Market-leading multi-WAN router backed by MetTel's geographically dispersed private network with multi-layer redundancy.
- The broadest compatibility with legacy telecom and safety/security equipment.
- Stock on-hand of pre-configured and pre-tested boards to support rapid, large-scale deployments.
- Nationwide professional installation and experience integrating with complex legacy systems.
- Complete lifecycle management services, 24/7/365 US-based support, and visibility into your environment



**>30%** estimated cost savings immediately and year over year

## Experts in Complex, Large-Scale Deployments



### EXTRA SPACE STORAGE

At least 4 different telecom aggregators attempted POTS replacement for Extra Space Storage unsuccessfully before MetTel was brought in.



The USPS to put their trust in MetTel to manage complex copper replacements across 17,000 sites nationwide. The success of this mass deployment earned MetTel the prestigious USPS Supplier Excellence Award.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is POTS Replacement?

POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) Replacement refers to the process of replacing outdated legacy copper telecom lines with modern, digital, IP-based solutions. The POTS replacement process begins with assessing a business's specific communication needs, the existing infrastructure, and the types of systems they use.

### When do I need to take action?

Copper retirement is in an active phase right now with carriers rapidly issuing notices across the country. The first permanent line shut down in the AT&T footprint will begin in June 2026. Once a full copper retirement notice is issued, you have 180 days to move to an alternative solution. There is already surging demand across the country as businesses are looking to get in front of this. The time to act is now.

### Why is MetTel's POTS Transformation solution the best option?

When it comes to keeping your critical systems online, performance, compatibility and redundancy matter. Our industry-leading "POTS in a Box" adapter routes calls over broadband, Wi-Fi, and LTE/5G with broad legacy system compatibility, backed by a geographically dispersed private network with multi-layer redundancy and 24/7/365 support. We maintain US-based inventory to support rapid, large-scale deployments and are well known for large-scale enterprise and federal deployments, including earning the prestigious USPS Supplier of the Year Award in 2024 for our nationwide rollout.

## POTS vs. PIAB Comparison

Features & Functionality	Traditional POTS Lines	MetTel POTS in a Box
Technology	TDM copper with POTS handoff	Proprietary software enabled digital VOIP with POTS handoff
Use Cases	Voice, Alarms, Elevators, Fire Panels, Fax, Point-of-Sale Devices, etc.	Voice, Alarms, Elevators, Fire Panels, Fax, Point-of-Sale Devices, etc.
Redundancy/Battery Backup	Limited	*24-48 hour built in battery backup
Cellular Failover/Auto-Restart	Manual intervention often required	Automatic reboot and cellular failover
Proactive Monitoring	No	Yes, included via MetTel Portal
IP Compatibility	Not IP-compatible	Fully IP-ready, integrates with digital infrastructure

\*Based on standard usage

## Act Now to Avoid Service Disruptions

*MetTel strongly suggests customers plan for a transition away from traditional POTS lines as soon as possible this year to avoid costly service disruptions.*

Please call your dedicated MetTel account manager or our customer service team at 866-876-9823 as soon as possible to discuss our alternative service options and avoid service disruption.



For more info, contact your MetTel agent or visit [mettel.net](https://mettel.net).  
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