DATAREMOTE

**Q4 2026 EDITION**

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# Copper Retirement Bulletin

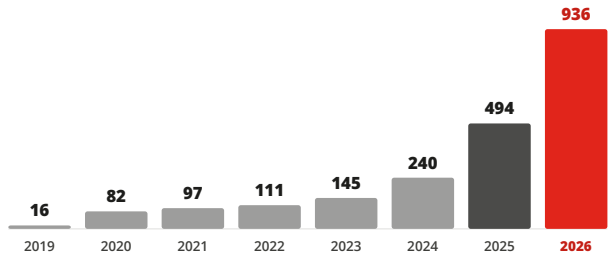
The State of the U.S. Copper Retirement: Line Counts, Regulatory Actions, and How to Prepare

## THIS QUARTER IN SHORT

The copper retirement has moved from filings to disconnections. AT&T says it has already discontinued copper service in more than 500 communities covering 1.3 million locations, and on November 15, 2026 it becomes authorized to do the same in portions of more than 1,000 wire centers across 19 states. Verizon has asked the FCC to retire copper POTS at about 750,000 locations in nine states and D.C. from November 30. The FCC's newest count, released November 2, puts remaining switched-access lines at 13.5 million, down from 15 million six months earlier, and its streamlined retirement rules took full effect on October 15. AT&T's 2027 waves are already approved. If fire alarm panels, elevator emergency phones, fax, or point-of-sale still run on copper, the notice is no longer the warning; it is the schedule.

### AT&T copper retirement notices, 2019–2026

**Up 58× since 2019 · 3.9× since 2024**




**13.5M**

Traditional copper POTS lines still in service in the U.S.

**19 states**

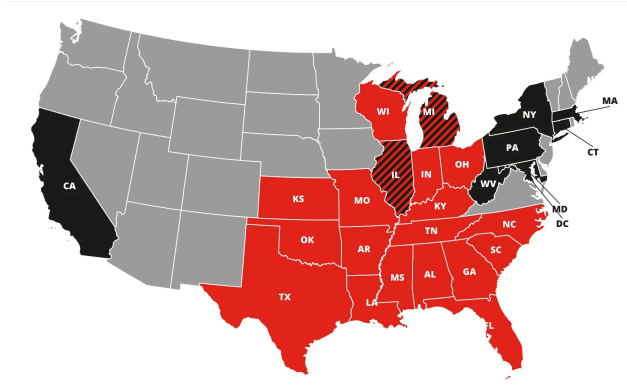
Where AT&T is authorized to discontinue copper voice service on or after November 15, 2026

**750,000**

Locations in Verizon's application to discontinue copper POTS from November 30, 2026

**$1,700**

Average monthly cost of an AT&T business copper access line, per AT&T




AT&T, authorized on or after Nov. 15, 2026

Verizon, proposed on or after Nov. 30, 2026

Both carriers

AT&T: 19 states with service discontinuance authorized on or after November 15, 2026 (WC Docket Nos. 25-333, 25-334, and 25-335). Verizon: nine states and D.C. in its September 9, 2026 application for discontinuance on or after November 30, 2026, which awaits FCC action. Affected areas are portions of wire centers, not whole states.

**AT&T: the waves already approved for 2027:** November 15 is the first of several AT&T discontinuances the FCC has already deemed granted. Further applications authorize discontinuance on or after January 29, 2027 in portions of 10 states (WC Docket No. 26-224); on or after June 1, 2027 in portions of 360 California wire centers serving approximately 184,000 residential and 15,000 business customers (WC Docket Nos. 26-120 and 26-121); and on or after September 1, 2027 in portions of 19 states including Nevada (WC Docket No. 26-210). A fourth, for portions of 14 states on or after April 2, 2027, went on public notice October 28 and is deemed granted November 28, 2026 unless the FCC acts (WC Docket No. 26-293). AT&T's third-quarter report restates its goal of decommissioning the large majority of its copper network by the end of 2029.

## 01 STATES IMPACTED

*Wire-center-level timing varies; confirm locations against your carrier's current notices. Full sourcing for every figure, the chart, and the map is in Methodology and Sources.*

> **Verizon: one application granted, one pulled from streamlined review:** Verizon's application for former Frontier areas in Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin (WC Docket No. 26-170) was deemed granted with discontinuance authorized on or after November 16, 2026. Its application for portions of Arizona, Delaware, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia (WC Docket No. 26-227) was removed from automatic grant on September 25, 2026, after county objections over wireless coverage and 911 access; the FCC said it needs additional time to complete its review. Verizon states it will not discontinue copper voice at a location without an approved replacement.

### AT&T service discontinuance authorized on or after November 15, 2026: 19 states

Portions of more than 1,000 AT&T wire centers. The legacy POTS application (WC Docket No. 25-335) covers 18 states and approximately 90,000 customers; companion applications for Remote Call Forwarding and copper-only AT&T Phone service (WC Docket Nos. 25-333 and 25-334) add Illinois. Affected areas are portions of the listed wire centers, not whole states; AT&T's customer notices state that service is subject to disconnection on or after the authorized date. The same ILEC affiliates filed a further application on September 21, 2026 covering 19 states for discontinuance on or after September 1, 2027.

AL AR FL GA IL IN KS KY LA MI MO MS NC OH OK SC TN TX WI

Source: FCC Public Notices DA 25-1043 and DA 25-1042 (December 12, 2025)

### Verizon copper POTS discontinuance proposed on or after November 30, 2026: nine states and D.C.

Verizon's September 9, 2026 application covers residential and business TDM-based POTS over copper in portions of these jurisdictions, at locations where Verizon fiber, Verizon mobile wireless, Verizon's fixed wireless POTS replacement, or a named third-party voice service is available. Customer notices were mailed September 8, 2026. The FCC had not released an acceptance public notice as of November 6, 2026, so no automatic-grant date has been set; the 10 jurisdictions are shown because the notices have already gone out.

CA CT DC IL MA MD MI NY PA WV

Source: Verizon, Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 26-252 (FCC ECFS, September 9, 2026)

### AT&T discontinued TDM service areas: 21 states

AT&T's own Discontinued TDM Service Areas workbook, retrieved by DataRemote on November 6, 2026, lists 100,512 location entries across 3,995 wire centers in 21 states, with effective dates through March 16, 2026. The state list is unchanged since the Q3 edition; the November 15 wave had not yet been added to the workbook at retrieval.

AL AR CA FL GA IL IN KS KY LA MI MO MS NC NV OH OK SC TN TX WI

Source: AT&T, Prime Access Discontinued Service Areas (workbook, retrieved November 6, 2026)

## 02 REGULATORY AND CARRIER MILESTONES

| DATE | MILESTONE | SOURCE |
|---|---|---|
| **June 29, 2026** | AT&T's California applications are deemed granted: discontinuance of residential and business legacy voice in portions of 360 wire centers, affecting approximately 184,000 residential and 15,000 business customers, authorized on or after June 1, 2027. The CPUC has since asked the full Commission to review the grant. | California PUC, Federal Applications to Discontinue Landline Voice Service (WC Docket Nos. 26-120 and 26-121) |
| **September 9, 2026** | Verizon applies to discontinue copper POTS at approximately 750,000 locations in nine states and D.C. on or after November 30, 2026, pending FCC approval; customer notices were mailed the day before. | Verizon, Section 63.71 application (FCC ECFS) |
| **September 21, 2026** | The FCC invites comment on AT&T's next legacy POTS application, covering portions of 19 states including Nevada, with discontinuance authorized on or after September 1, 2027. | FCC Public Notice DA 26-1011, WC Docket No. 26-210 |
| **September 25, 2026** | The FCC removes Verizon's nine-state application (Arizona through Virginia, WC Docket No. 26-227) from automatic grant, stating that it requires additional time to complete its review and that the removal is not a determination on the merits. | FCC Public Notice DA 26-1038 |
| **October 15, 2026** | The FCC 26-19 amendments to the network-change disclosure and discontinuance rules (47 CFR §§ 51.329, 51.333, 63.60–63.71, and 63.602) take effect following OMB approval, completing the streamlined framework adopted in March. | Federal Register, 91 FR 62334 (October 1, 2026) |
| **October 19, 2026** | AT&T reports that only 1% of its eligible customers still use legacy copper voice service, that it has discontinued copper services in more than 500 communities covering more than 1.3 million locations across 18 states, and that it will upgrade customers across 1,500 more communities over the next year. | AT&T, "Delivering Faster, More Reliable Connections" (Susan Johnson, AT&T blog) |
| **October 21, 2026** | AT&T's third-quarter results report legacy segment revenue down 24.5% year over year, restate the goal of decommissioning the large majority of its copper-based network by the end of 2029, and project legacy EBITDA turning negative after 2027 until copper operating costs are substantially eliminated. | AT&T Inc., Form 8-K exhibit 99.1, third-quarter 2026 results |
| **October 28, 2026** | The FCC invites comment on AT&T's application to discontinue legacy POTS and copper-only AT&T Phone service in portions of 14 states on or after April 2, 2027; comments are due November 12 and the application is deemed granted November 28, 2026 unless the FCC acts. | FCC Public Notice DA 26-1164, WC Docket No. 26-293 |
| **October 30, 2026** | FCC Chairman Carr circulates a draft order to preempt California's carrier-of-last-resort rules as applied to AT&T's federally authorized discontinuances (WC Docket No. 26-125). No vote date has been set. | Broadband Breakfast (October 30, 2026) |
| **November 2, 2026** | The FCC releases the Voice Telephone Services Report for December 31, 2025: 13.5 million end-user switched-access lines, down from 15.0 million in June 2025. | FCC, Voice Telephone Services Report |

| DATE | MILESTONE | SOURCE |
|---|---|---|
| **November 5, 2026** | AT&T's application to discontinue PrimePath and other TDM business lines sold by its competitive affiliates across 34 states and D.C. is deemed granted, with discontinuance authorized on or after the same date. | FCC Public Notice DA 26-1075, WC Docket No. 26-276 |
| **November 15, 2026** | Authorized date for AT&T's discontinuance of legacy POTS, Remote Call Forwarding, and copper-only AT&T Phone service in portions of 19 states; AT&T's notices state that service is subject to disconnection on or after this date. | FCC Public Notices DA 25-1043 and DA 25-1042 |

## 03 KEY IMPLICATIONS

The first large AT&T disconnection wave is no longer a forecast. Lines in the affected portions of 19 states are subject to disconnection from November 15, 2026, and the replacement AT&T relies on is its own LTE voice service with up to 24 hours of battery standby, which does not line-power the equipment on the far end.

Verizon's filing shows how little copper is left and how fast the rest goes: about 750,000 of the 28 million locations it could serve with POTS in nine states and D.C. still subscribe, and all of them are proposed for discontinuance where a replacement is available. The FCC pulled a sister application from streamlined review over coverage and 911 objections, which slows a wave but does not reverse it.

The FCC's streamlined rules are now fully in force. Since October 15, 2026, a technology-transition discontinuance is deemed granted 31 days after public notice, grandfathering needs no separate application, and the FCC asserts preemption of state rules that would delay a federally authorized retirement. A draft order preempting California's carrier-of-last-resort rules is in circulation.

Rates on remaining copper lines keep rising. AT&T's own application puts the average business access line at about $1,700 per month before discounts, and MetTel documents rates above $3,300 per line across 10 states. Support shrinks on the same curve: AT&T's legacy segment revenue fell 24.5% year over year, its CEO told investors on October 21 that more than 100 wire centers now have no customers on legacy services, and it expects the segment to lose money after 2027 until copper operating costs are gone.

Copper retirement reaches beyond phones. Fire alarm panels, elevator emergency phones, security systems, fax, and point-of-sale lines are all affected. A disconnected life-safety line is also a code problem: it can block inspections and occupancy sign-off, or force paid fire-watch coverage until communication is restored.

Demand for replacement hardware and installation surges as each wave lands, and the 2027 waves are already approved: January 29 in 10 states, June 1 in California, September 1 in 19 states, with April 2 in 14 states on notice. AT&T's stated target is copper discontinued in half its wire centers outside California by the end of 2027. Organizations that wait for their notice compete for equipment and scheduling with everyone else who waited.

## 04 HOW TO PREPARE FOR COPPER DECOMMISSIONING

### 1
**Identify**

Inventory every location, circuit, carrier, and legacy service, paying closest attention to the specialty lines that do not look like phones: fire panels, elevator phones, security systems, fax machines, point-of-sale, and modem-based telemetry.

### 2
**Validate**

Confirm the retirement notices, dates, and affected services with the carrier for each address. Discontinuance applies to portions of wire centers, so two sites in one city can be on different schedules.

### 3
**Assess**

Separate voice from life-safety, security, and other specialty applications. Each class has its own signaling needs, code requirements, and sign-off path.

### 4
**Select**

Match each application to compatible replacement hardware. Most replacement products have compatibility limits with analog signaling; life-safety endpoints need certified equipment and sign-off from your alarm company, elevator contractor, and the authority having jurisdiction.

### 5
**Migrate**

Schedule installations, testing, and cutovers ahead of the carrier's date, not after it. Migrating on your own schedule is cheaper and calmer than migrating inside a notice window, and installation demand rises with every wave.

### 6
**Verify**

Test every line end to end, document completion for inspectors and insurers, and establish ongoing monitoring and support so a failed line is caught before the next inspection finds it.

Step-by-step planning guidance: dataremote.com/blog/complete-guide-to-pots-line-replacement-2026 and dataremote.com/blog/pots-line-replacement-cost

## 05 THE REPLACEMENT PATH: COPPER POTS LINES VS. POTS IN A BOX®

DataRemote's POTS line replacement keeps the analog interface and retires the copper underneath it. POTS IN A BOX® appliances present standard RJ-11 FXS ports locally and carry voice, fax, DTMF, and alarm signaling over managed cellular (5G/LTE) or wired IP, with integrated battery backup, automatic cellular failover, and E911 support on properly provisioned models and configurations. Every appliance is managed through the Ara platform: provisioning, real-time line status, alerts, and remote diagnostics.

| FEATURE | TRADITIONAL COPPER POTS LINE | POTS IN A BOX® |
|---|---|---|
| **Technology** | TDM over copper pairs with an analog POTS handoff | **Managed cellular (5G/LTE) or wired IP with the same analog RJ-11/FXS handoff** |
| **Use cases** | Voice, alarms, elevators, fire panels, fax, point-of-sale | **The same endpoints, preserved without replacing the equipment** |
| **Availability** | Grandfathered and being retired; AT&T targets nationwide copper retirement by 2029 | **Available today over certified nationwide 5G/LTE networks** |

| FEATURE | TRADITIONAL COPPER POTS LINE | POTS IN A BOX® |
|---|---|---|
| **Monthly cost** | Repricing upward as regulation winds down; documented rates above $3,300/month in some states | **Predictable managed pricing, with savings up to 50%** |
| **Power outages** | Central-office line power, degrading as copper plant ages | **Integrated UPS battery backup of up to 48 hours, depending on model and load** |
| **Failover** | Manual intervention and carrier tickets | **Automatic cellular failover and dual-SIM carrier redundancy** |
| **Monitoring** | None; faults surface when something fails | **Real-time line status, alerts, and remote diagnostics via Ara** |
| **E-911** | Fixed street address on file | **E911 with GNSS geo-location on supported models and configurations** |

Certification and listing status is model-specific; each product page publishes the exact records for that model: dataremote.com/pots-in-a-box

## 06 PROVEN AT SCALE

The largest documented POTS transformations in the federal space run on POTS IN A BOX® hardware, deployed and managed by DataRemote's partner, MetTel.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### $54M landline modernization across 1,875 VA sites

MetTel secured a $54 million contract to modernize roughly 15,000 landlines across 1,875 VA facilities, using DataRemote's POTS IN A BOX® to migrate lines while keeping existing analog equipment in service.

Record: dataremote.com/newsroom/news/va-pots-transformation

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

### 23,000 postal locations, recognized with a USPS Supplier Excellence Award

MetTel earned a 2024 USPS Supplier Excellence Award for modernizing landlines at roughly 23,000 postal locations with DataRemote's POTS IN A BOX® hardware, managed centrally through the Ara platform.

Record: dataremote.com/newsroom/news/mettel-usps-supplier-excellence-award-dataremote

## 07 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What happens on November 15, 2026?**

AT&T becomes authorized to stop providing legacy POTS, Remote Call Forwarding, and copper-only AT&T Phone service in the portions of wire centers listed in its applications across 19 states. Its customer notices say the service is subject to disconnection on or after that date, so the carrier chooses the day. Lines are not all cut at once, but none of them is safe after it.

### How do I know whether my location is affected?

Discontinuance applies to portions of specific wire centers, not whole states. Check the carrier's notice for the address, the application's wire-center exhibit, and the ZIP-code lists carriers and their partners publish; then confirm with the carrier. Two sites in the same city can fall in different waves.

### Is Verizon's November 30 date final?

No. November 30, 2026 is the date Verizon requested in its September 9 application. As of November 6, 2026, the FCC had not released the public notice that starts the 31-day automatic-grant clock, and it removed a separate Verizon application from streamlined review in September. Verizon has told customers it will not discontinue copper voice at a location without an approved replacement; plan for the requested date and track the docket.

### Which lines are most at risk?

Code-governed and business-critical specialty lines: fire alarm panels, elevator emergency phones, security systems, fax, and point-of-sale devices. These endpoints depend on analog signaling behaviors that generic VoIP adapters often do not preserve, and for life-safety lines the replacement must satisfy the applicable code and the authority having jurisdiction, not just provide dial tone.

### How does DataRemote address copper retirement?

POTS IN A BOX® appliances present standard RJ-11 FXS ports locally and carry voice, fax, DTMF, and alarm signaling over managed cellular (5G/LTE) or wired IP, with integrated battery backup, automatic cellular failover, and E911 support on properly provisioned models and configurations. Every appliance is managed through the Ara platform for provisioning, real-time line status, alerts, and remote diagnostics, which is how deployments scale to thousands of sites.

### How is this bulletin updated?

Quarterly. Each edition is a dated record: new editions are added and prior editions are archived unchanged, so a citation to a specific edition stays accurate. Every figure links to its source, and third-party tracking data is always attributed to the organization that produced it.


## Talk to a POTS Replacement Specialist

Tell us what's running on your copper lines (phones, alarms, elevators, fax, POS) and we'll map each line to a managed replacement before the retirement notice arrives.

| WEB | SALES | SUPPORT | EMAIL |
|---|---|---|---|
| dataremote.com/contact | 305-521-7400 | 1-800-848-1617 | sales@dataremote.com |


## 08 METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

This edition compiles verified public data with primary sourcing wherever a primary record exists. Line counts and decline rates come from the FCC's Voice Telephone Services Report released November 2, 2026; discontinuance authorizations, dates, states, and customer counts from the FCC's Section 214 public notices and the carriers' filed applications (AT&T's via the Florida PSC courtesy copy, Verizon's via the FCC's ECFS), with the California figures as published by the CPUC; the rule effective date from the Federal Register; AT&T's financial statements from its Form 8-K, its progress figures from its own October 19, 2026 blog post, and its 2027 target from the published transcript of its October 21 earnings call; and the discontinued service-area list and disclosure tally directly from AT&T's own workbook and Network Disclosures index, retrieved and counted by DataRemote on November 6, 2026. Annual notice tallies and copper rate observations are attributed to MetTel's Copper Retirement Bulletin (October 2026), and one regulatory development that has no public FCC document yet (the circulating California preemption order)

is attributed to the trade press that reported it. No figure is estimated or modeled by DataRemote. Where a date is a carrier's request rather than an FCC authorization, the text says so.

**Page 1 figure, chart, and map sourcing:** 13.5M — FCC, Voice Telephone Services Report (data as of December 31, 2025; released November 2, 2026). 19 states — FCC Public Notices DA 25-1043 and DA 25-1042, WC Docket Nos. 25-333, 25-334, and 25-335 (December 12, 2025). 750,000 — Verizon, Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 26-252 (FCC ECFS, September 9, 2026). $1,700 — AT&T Services, Inc., Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 25-335 (December 1, 2025; courtesy copy via Florida PSC). Notices-by-year chart — AT&T publishes its Section 251 network-change notices, including copper retirements, on its CLEC Online Network Disclosures site; annual copper-retirement counts shown here are as tallied by MetTel (Copper Retirement Bulletin, October 2026), whose 2026 figure includes 442 notices received since January 1, 2026. The Q3 edition carried MetTel's July tally of 824. DataRemote's own check of AT&T's Network Disclosures index on November 6, 2026 found 447 disclosures carrying a 2026 revision date, 428 of them copper retirements, spanning all 21 states in AT&T's wireline footprint, with California (107) and Florida (56) the most frequent. The two series count different things (MetTel counts notices received; the index lists each disclosure once, by its latest revision date) and are not summed. Full DataRemote-derived tracking by notice type and wire center remains planned. States map and lists — FCC Public Notices DA 25-1043 and DA 25-1042 (December 12, 2025); Verizon, Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 26-252 (FCC ECFS, September 9, 2026); AT&T, Prime Access Discontinued Service Areas (workbook, retrieved November 6, 2026).


1. FCC, Voice Telephone Services Report (data as of December 31, 2025; released November 2, 2026) — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-426408A1.pdf
2. FCC Public Notices DA 25-1043 and DA 25-1042, WC Docket Nos. 25-333, 25-334, and 25-335 (December 12, 2025) — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-25-1043A1.pdf
3. Verizon, Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 26-252 (FCC ECFS, September 9, 2026) — fcc.gov/ecfs/document/26110076152/1
4. AT&T Services, Inc., Section 63.71 application, WC Docket No. 25-335 (December 1, 2025; courtesy copy via Florida PSC) — floridapsc.com/library/filings/2025/15393-2025/15393-2025.pdf
5. AT&T CLEC Online, Network Disclosures (the primary venue where these notices are published) — clec.att.com/clec/shell.cfm
6. FCC, Domestic Section 214 discontinuance public notices (DA 26-942, DA 26-539, DA 26-1011, DA 26-1164) — fcc.gov/general/domestic-section-214-discontinuance-service
7. FCC Public Notices DA 26-763 (July 21, 2026) and DA 26-1038 (September 25, 2026) — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-1038A1.pdf
8. AT&T, Prime Access Discontinued Service Areas (workbook, retrieved November 6, 2026) — clec.att.com (XLSX)
9. California PUC, Federal Applications to Discontinue Landline Voice Service (WC Docket Nos. 26-120 and 26-121) — cpuc.ca.gov
10. FCC Public Notice DA 26-1011, WC Docket No. 26-210 — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-1011A1.pdf
11. Federal Register, 91 FR 62334 (October 1, 2026) — federalregister.gov
12. AT&T, "Delivering Faster, More Reliable Connections" (Susan Johnson, AT&T blog) — about.att.com/blogs/2026/simplifying-our-network.html
13. AT&T Inc., Form 8-K exhibit 99.1, third-quarter 2026 results — sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/0000732717/000073271726000370/t-3q2026exhibit991.htm
14. FCC Public Notice DA 26-1164, WC Docket No. 26-293 — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-1164A1.pdf
15. Broadband Breakfast (October 30, 2026) — broadbandbreakfast.com/fcc-circulating-order-to-preempt-california-copper-retirement-rules/
16. FCC, Voice Telephone Services Report — fcc.gov/voice-telephone-services-report
17. FCC Public Notice DA 26-1075, WC Docket No. 26-276 — docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-1075A1.pdf
18. DataRemote Newsroom, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: $54M landline modernization across 1,875 VA sites — dataremote.com/newsroom/news/va-pots-transformation
19. DataRemote Newsroom, United States Postal Service: 23,000 postal locations, recognized with a USPS Supplier Excellence Award — dataremote.com/newsroom/news/mettel-usps-supplier-excellence-award-dataremote


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