



## **WHAT TO DO WHEN A TELEPHONE COMPANY DISCONTINUES SERVICE TO YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS?**

The Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission annually registers telecommunication providers that offer local and in-state toll services such as facility-based carriers, resellers, debit-card telephone companies etc. There are instances when such providers decide to discontinue its telecommunication service in Rhode Island.

When a provider discontinues service, the company is required to send written notice to the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities & Carriers at least 15 calendar days prior the date of service interruption. In accordance with State regulations, the provider is also responsible to notify its customers by letter that it is no longer offering service.

With such notice of service discontinuance, the customer should be allowed sufficient time to select another telephone carrier. When a customer is unaware of the service interruption and does not choose another carrier, then the customer is defaulted to the local incumbent Telephone Company, Verizon, in order to maintain dial tone and to continue basic telephone service. The customer would then have the opportunity to chose another carrier if desired.

If your in-state toll or long distance telephone provider discontinues service, you may want to change your toll carrier before the cut-off date or you may want to temporarily choose a "Dial Around" number for such services. "Dial Around" service is an alternative dialing that bypasses a customer's designated long-distance carrier. The telephone user is required to dial a carrier code ("10-10" xxx number) before the called party's telephone number.

