False Alarm Prevention
Information for Alarm Users

IT IS EVERYONE'S
RESPONSIBILITY TO

STOP

FALSE ALARMS

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Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Problems for Security Systems

VoIP is a telephone service available from a variety of service providers including telephone companies, cable companies, and do-it-yourself consumer-installable telephone devices. The intent of VoIP is to replace the traditional Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS). Because of the different methods that exist with VOIP, there are some methods that are not compatible with alarm systems As a result, the alarm system may not send alarm signals to a monitoring station.

The following information provides an overview of the problems associated with VoIP service:

Why VoIP Will Not Allow Alarm Signals to Reach the Monitoring Company
- The compression that takes place during the analog to digital translation and back again can affect the communication of some signals, allowing many signals to be communicated correctly and many to NOT be communicated correctly.
- The VoIP adapter is often _not_ wired to the phone jack correctly.
- If the line seizure function is not wired properly, the alarm system may not send signals if someone is using a telephone or a telephone is left off the hook.
- VoIP providers use different Internet communication methods to carry their telephone service. The customer may not be aware of any change until the alarm system is no longer able to transmit signals.
- The VoIP service may not allow the alarm company to remotely download changes to the alarm control panel. This may result in the alarm user having to pay for a technician to come out to service the system.
- Some alarm systems may not detect the loss of Internet connection, and backup power supplies are not required for all VoIP systems. Therefore, during a power outage, alarm users may believe their alarm systems are still communicating to the central station, as the panel is still functioning on battery power when, in fact, communication to the central station has been compromised due to the lack of power to the VoIP. Note: some VoIP providers offer VoIP adaptors that contain up to 4 hours of battery backup; you should insure your VoIP has such a battery backup.

Because internet and cable phone service technology changes so fast, alarm users MUST regularly test the ability of their alarm system to transmit signals per their alarm company instructions. If you are unsure of how to properly test your system, call your alarm company for instructions.

Alternatives to Help Ensure Open Communication Lines
- Test your alarm system regularly.
- Purchase an alternate methods such as a long-range radio, internet or cellular from your alarm company.
- Alternate communication transmission methods must be paid for separately and could increase the monthly monitoring rate as well.

The Future of VoIP
VoIP is here to stay. Although some VoIP providers use methods following written standards and specifications, others, such as do-it-yourself or consumer installed VoIP adapters, do not. You should discuss this with your security and VoIP providers.

Learn More
Before you change your telephone service, contact your alarm company and your VoIP provider for more information on how your alarm system will or will not work with VoIP telephone service. If you decide to use VoIP, be sure to notify your alarm company **BEFORE** you make the change.