

ASC Technicians' Advice: The Truth About Voice Over Internet Protocol Telephone Service & Alarm Systems

Talk to us before you jump on the VoIP bandwagon!

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) enables the transmission of voice data over the Internet using a voice adapter. This technology, around for a decade, is suddenly popular – you can make calls via the internet at low or no cost. However, consider what two local VoIP providers have to say about monitored burglar alarm systems:

The Terms of Service section of Vonage's contract states: *"The Service may not be compatible with home security systems. You may be required to maintain a telephone connection through your local exchange carrier in order to use any alarm monitoring functions for any security system installed in your home or business."*

SunRocket's website says: *"While SunRocket can work effectively with your home alarm system, we advise against it unless you are maintaining a traditional landline connection."*

Furthermore, wireless network providers **will not guarantee** emergency response using 911, which you probably take for granted with your land-line phone system.

Burglar alarm systems are not compatible with high-speed data transmission. Some manufacturers (such as GE) have developed modules to interface between their systems and wireless communication networks. Other manufacturers (such as Honeywell/Ademco) have not yet offered equipment that will do this. Their "wait and see" attitude should tell you something: **The primary function of a burglar alarm system is safety, whereas a telephone is convenience-oriented.** A "dropped call" when you're talking to a friend, may not be serious, but a "dropped call" when you are depending on your burglar alarm to summon emergency responders, is another matter.

Where personal safety is concerned, ASC always advises customers to err on the side of caution.

ASC strongly recommends that, should you switch to VoIP, you maintain a land-line for your burglar alarm system. You would not need long-distance service – the Central Station's telephone number is toll free. Verizon charges only \$12 per month (plus applicable fees and taxes) for Economy Service – a small price for peace of mind.