

## **Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP)**

### **Tips and Reminders**

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) allows customers to make voice calls using an Internet connection instead of a regular (or analog) phone line.

"Access to traditional 911 service may be compromised when using a VoIP telephone service". "We want to encourage consumers to fully understand any traditional 911 access limitations that a VoIP service may have."

Emergency calls made on land lines are answered by local 911 operators and automatically have addresses and phone numbers attached to them, making it easier to dispatch an ambulance or other emergency vehicle. However, 911 calls made with VoIP may be transferred to an out-of-province call centre, and cannot be automatically tracked because there is no physical address linked to the signal.

With a traditional land line telephone service, your address is automatically updated when you move, but using a VoIP system, "It is the responsibility of the customer to ensure the address registered with the service provider is accurate and current". Therefore, if a caller is unable to speak, or if the call is disconnected, the operator may not have the required location information.

Power failure or disrupted internet connection can also disconnect access to 911 service. It is suggested VoIP customers should find out how their provider suggests emergency calls will be handled during an internet or power outage.

Voice over Internet Protocol phone service may also be referred to as Broadband Phone, VON (Voice on Net), Internet Phone, or Net Phone, among others.

For additional information, the 2005 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission decision on 9-1-1 emergency services for Voice Over Internet Protocol service providers is available at [www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/news/releases/2005/r050404.htm](http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/news/releases/2005/r050404.htm)

### **Tips for VoIP Customers**

- Verify that you can access 9-1-1 with your phone. Check your service provider's website for emergency calling features.
- Be sure to keep your address current with your VoIP provider.

- If the power is out, your VoIP service may be out too. Consider purchasing a back up power supply.
- If you travel with your VoIP adapter, be sure to update your location with your service provider. The time it takes to process the update can vary considerably; therefore, when traveling, if you need 9-1-1 service, use another phone.
- Inform children, babysitters, the elderly and visitors about your VoIP service.
- Post your civic address and call-back phone number near your phone.
- It is a good idea to know what police, fire or ambulance department is responsible for your 9-1-1 call and have their phone number on hand to provide to the call taker.
- Consider keeping a land line phone for accessing 9-1-1 emergency services.
- Burglar alarms often rely on analog modems. Check with your VoIP provider to determine if their service supports analog modems.
- For more information: [www.911voip.org/tips.htm](http://www.911voip.org/tips.htm)