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Vermont Relay

VERMONT TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE

Fall 2013



Vermont's Enhanced 911 Board announces completion of text-to-911 trial with Sprint Nextel

The text-to-911 trial with Sprint Nextel in Vermont ended on May 31. Sprint participated in this trial, which started in December 2012, in order to voluntarily commit to making text-to-911 service available nationally by May 2014. Sprint also intends to implement a bounce-back message to subscribers for whom text-to-911 service is not available.

Both Sprint and the Enhanced 911 Board have deemed the trial in Vermont a success. It helped demonstrate that this service could be delivered effectively to Sprint subscribers and should prove helpful in working toward permanent implementation of the service within a year. During the trial, no emergency text messages were received from Sprint subscribers in Vermont.

"We went into this trial with no expectation that it would be continued in the near term," said Enhanced 911 Board Executive Director David Tucker. "We had certainly hoped that would be the case, but there are good reasons to stop now so that Sprint can implement necessary technical changes that will enable the nationwide rollout next year."

National Director for Sprint Relay Services Mike Ellis said, "As Sprint's six-month participation in a trial of text-to-911 service comes to an end in Vermont, we want to reaffirm our commitment to exploring new emergency communication alterna-

tives for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community." He added, "Sprint looks forward to continued work on evaluating this short-term solution and extends a huge thanks to Vermont for giving us this unique collaborative opportunity."

The Enhanced 911 Board continues to work with wireless carriers on full text-to-911 service implementation statewide, with the goal of having it take place as soon as possible. All citizens and wireless subscribers are reminded that they should first attempt to make a voice call to 911 whenever possible during an emergency.



www.vermontrelay.com

From the desk of...

Account Manager

Michelle Sangster Vicino



What a busy year 2013 has been for Vermont Relay! From the launch of Enhanced Speech to Speech, the new CapTel 840 to annual filings with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), we strive to bring you the best services.

VCDHH continues to be Vermont Relay's "feet on the street" and has been conducting outreach all over the state. From one-on-one training to residential visits to community event sponsorships to business visits, we are here to help with your telecommunication needs. If you need assistance or would like to set up a training session for a larger group, please contact VCDHH at vtedp@vcdhh.org or 888-254-3323 ext. 549.

Vermont Relay also continues to remain visible in publications in the state, such as *Vermont Maturity*, *Vermont Business Magazine*, *Williston Observer*, and *Newcomers Guide*. Many are unaware of the available telecommunication support. If you know of an individual or organization that could benefit from our services, let us know.

As always, Vermont Relay makes a continuous effort to reach out to the hearing community and educate people on receiving relay calls that are oftentimes mistaken for telemarketers. Our "Please, Don't Hang Up" marketing campaign includes office visits and a DVD to explain the importance of accepting relay calls. If you have experienced being hung up on, fill out the "Don't Hang Up" form at www.vermontrelay.com, or e-mail or call me. I want your relay calls to be a pleasant experience.

Enjoy the remainder of 2013, and as always, let me know if I can do anything to make your Vermont Relay experience even better.

Vermont Relay achieves recertification!



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires all telecommunication relay services (TRS) providers to recertify their service every five years. Under the FCC's TRS regulations, each state or territory may file an application for certification renewal one year prior to expiration.

The purpose of this recertification process is to make sure that providers are in functional and operational compliance.

TRS enables those with hearing and speech disabilities to access the telephone system to communicate with others. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the FCC must ensure that TRS is functionally equivalent to voice telephone service. In order to obtain certification, or recertification, a state must submit relevant documentation to the FCC describing their relay program and how they enforce any requirements that the program may have. Additionally, the state must show how it makes complaint procedures information available to TRS users.

In preparation of Vermont Relay's certification expiration date, the Vermont Relay Account Manager and the Vermont Public Service Department started this time-consuming process in Summer 2012. After much hard work and collaboration, Vermont Relay is happy to announce that the FCC granted it recertification for the next five years!

"Don't Hang Up" Campaign educates others

Did a business or individual hang up on you when you tried to call through VTRS? Let us know! Our "Don't Hang Up" Campaign works to decrease the frequency of hang-ups by people who are unfamiliar with relay. The campaign includes a public service announcement, as well as articles in business publications. Let us know by filling out a form at www.vermontrelay.com and clicking on "Don't Hang Up."

New CapTel 840 offers built-in answering machine

The new CapTel 840 phone now has a built-in answering machine! CapTel has come out with a new version of its captioned telephone to replace the 800 model. The new model is physically identical to the 800 model, except for a larger screen with widened borders in order to provide enhanced caption viewing.

Based on customer feedback, the following additional features were added to the 840:

- A built-in answering machine
- Extra-large 7" display screen
- Spanish menu options
- Additional large font sizes (for low vision customers)
- Real-time clock display
- Phone book to store frequently called numbers; nearly 100 numbers can be stored
- Easy access to voice mail and answering machine messages

CapTel works like any other telephone with one important addition: it displays every word the other



party says throughout the conversation. CapTel phone users can listen to the caller, and also read the written captions in the CapTel's bright display window. A CapTel phone user places a call in the same way as dialing a traditional phone. As he or she dials, the CapTel phone automatically connects to a captioning service. When the other party answers, the CapTel phone user hears everything the other party says, just like a traditional call. A specially trained

operator transcribes everything the other party says into written text, which appears on the phone screen.

Contact the Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program today to see if you qualify for a free CapTel phone or other devices. This service is funded by the state of Vermont and is completely free of charge for income-eligible Vermonters. None of the equipment requires monthly service fees or initial setup fees.

More information is at www.vermontrelay.com, or call (888) 254-3323 x549 (TTY/Voice), or (866) 327-2640 Videophone.

DPS invites feedback on VTRS

Your feedback is wanted!

The Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS) would like to hear from you. DPS wants to know how well Vermont Telecommunications Relay Service (VTRS) is working, for deaf, hard of hearing and speech-disabled Vermonters, as well as the hearing community. They'd like to hear about your experiences using VTRS, what you like, what you don't like, and how the service could be improved. If you have called someone using the relay service and been hung up on, DPS wants to know about it. If you're having problems with your CapTel phone or service, please also share that. Positive comments about VTRS are also welcomed.

To give your feedback, contact the DPS Consumer Affairs & Public Information Division:
 1-800-734-8390 TTY
 1-800-622-4496 Voice
consumer@state.vt.us

Or visit www.vermontrelay.com and click on the survey link at the top of the page.

Vermont Relay

Vermont Relay:

711
(800) 253-0191 TTY
(800) 253-0195 Voice
(800) 253-8260 VCO
(800) 243-2823 CapTel
(800) 253-0191 HCO
(877) 253-0446 STS

Contact Customer Service

(800) 676-3777 TTY/Voice

Contact Vermont Relay:

michelle.sangster@sprint.com
(860) 899-1097 VP
(860) 986-7234 Voice

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www.vermontrelay.com

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Michelle Sangster
34 Jerome Ave
Suite 220
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Or e-mail Michelle.Sangster@sprint.com



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