



Make your connection...

Vermont Relay

VERMONT TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE

Winter 2009

Captioned Telephone News

Use the Signal Meter to Know When It is Your Turn

The Signal Meter is a helpful visual cue that flickers to let you know when there are sounds on the line (such as the other person speaking), even if the sounds are not loud enough for you to hear. If the Signal Meter stops flickering during a call, it means the other person is done talking and it is your turn to speak.

Sometimes the Signal Meter shows that the other person has finished speaking, but you are still receiving captions. Ask the caller to “hang on a moment” to give yourself a little extra time to read the captions before speaking.

Leaving Your CapTel Phone Behind?

You can still get captions during your phone calls even if your CapTel phone doesn't fit into your travel plans.

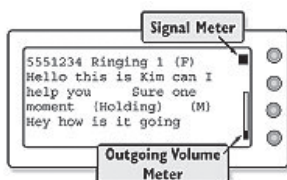
By using WebCapTel® when you travel, you can still see captions during your calls. All you need is a working telephone and a computer with an Internet connection.

Learn more at www.captel.com/webcaptel.php or www.hearinglosshelp.com/weblog/?p=279.

Stormy Weather on the Horizon?

Vermonters can experience stormy weather, lightning, and power outages. If you've experienced problems with your CapTel phone after a power surge, a nearby lightning strike or outage, try resetting the phone.

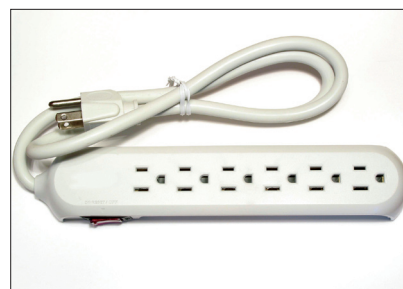
To reset the phone, simply disconnect the AC power adapter and the phone line for one minute, then reconnect everything. Check your menu settings after reset-



ting your CapTel phone if you had special settings programmed prior to resetting.

Protect Your CapTel Phone At Home

If you live in an area that experiences frequent power surges or electrical storms, plug your CapTel AC adapter into a surge protector (available at most hardware or computer stores). This will help prevent CapTel phone power disruptions.



Did You Know?

USB Option for Large-Print Captions



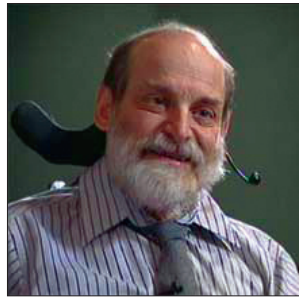
Now CapTel users can read conversation captions on their computer screen, at any size or font style they choose. The CapTel USB option lets you connect the CapTel phone to a computer to view captions on the computer monitor. Visit www.captel.com/usb-captel.php for more details.

www.vermontrelay.com

Speech-to-Speech Founder Bob Segalman

Dr. Bob Segalman, a research analyst with the California Dept. of Rehabilitation, has worked for the State of California in various capacities for the last 29 years. He is one of three Californians with profound cerebral palsy to hold an earned Ph.D., awarded to him in 1972.

When Dr. Segalman began his career in 1972, one of his biggest difficulties was using the telephone. Due to his voice, which is at a whisper-level because his vocal cords do not work, it was difficult for people to understand him over the telephone. As a result, in 1990, Dr. Segalman developed the concept of an assistive technology (AT) service called



Bob Segalman, Ph.D.

Speech-to-Speech (STS). STS is a type of relay service for people with difficulties being understood over the telephone.

According to Dr. Segalman, currently only 500 people in the United States use STS, but over two million people could benefit from this service if they knew it was available. Additional outreach and education would benefit everyone. Dr. Segalman continues to work toward this goal. For

more information about Dr. Segalman's ongoing efforts to promote telephone access service for Americans with speech disabilities, e-mail drsts@comcast.net or visit www.spechtospeech.org.

Speech-to-Speech: Share It With Someone You Know! (877) 253-0446

- **A specially trained relay operator serves as the speech-disabled user's voice and repeats his/her responses to the called party.**
- **Vermont Relay's equipment and exceptional operator training ensure that people with speech disabilities are heard and understood.**
- **Speech-to-speech is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with no restrictions on the length or number of calls placed.**
- **As an added benefit, VT Relay can permanently establish your call type as speech-to-speech.**

For more information, visit
www.vermontrelay.com

VTEDP Provides Free Adaptive Telephone Equipment

The Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (VTEDP) provides *free* adaptive telephone equipment to income-qualified Vermonters with disabilities.

Are you Deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired, visually impaired, or have a physical disability that makes it hard for you to use a telephone? If you qualify, the VTEDP will provide you with a free telephone system adapted to your specific needs, so you can once again communicate with friends and family. The VTEDP is funded by the State of Vermont, and none of the equipment requires monthly service fees or initial setup fees.

Eligible Vermonters also may obtain or repair equipment, such as a TTY or Braille TTY, CapTel phone, amplified phone, flashing lights or loud ringer devices, voice carry-over or hearing carry-over telephones, an electrolarynx telephone, or other adaptive telephone equipment.

For more information on the program or eligible equipment, call (888) 254-3323 extension 549 TTY/Voice or (866) 327-2640 videophone, or e-mail vtedp@vcdhh.org. You may also visit www.vcdhh.org and click on the link for VCDHH programs, and then the link for VTEDP.

Ten-Digit Numbering is Launched

Internet Relay Customers Can Now Receive Calls Through Their Personal 10-Digit Local Phone Number

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted a system for assigning 10-digit telephone numbers to users of Internet-based relay services such as video relay service (VRS) and Internet protocol (IP) relay.

What this means is that Internet relay users now have a 10-digit telephone number just like everyone else. The FCC required that VRS and IP relay users obtain a 10-digit number by Nov. 12. These users needed to decide which VRS and IP provider they wanted as their default provider.

To obtain a 10-digit number, contact your chosen VRS provider either through the VRS company's website or customer care center. This number, which is your voice and videophone number, can then be shared with anyone, hearing or deaf. For instance, give this same telephone number to your doctor, car mechanic, and friends and family; they can call either by voice or videophone.

The deadline to complete registration for a 10-digit telephone number was Nov. 12. **VRS or IP relay users who were not registered by this deadline will no longer be able to make or receive calls. Emergency calls will be allowed for non-registered users, but only for a limited time.**

How It Works

A hearing person can call a VRS user's telephone number without having to first call VRS. The call will automatically route through the VRS provider that the VRS user registered with. This same telephone number can also be used by a deaf person calling through a videophone. The system will recognize the call regardless of whether it comes from a deaf caller or a hearing caller, and IP addresses will no longer be needed. Nor will a caller need to dial a toll-free number. The only number to dial will be the user's 10-digit number.

Another benefit of having a 10-digit telephone number is that VRS users can call 9-1-1 and their default VRS providers will know who the callers are and where they are located without asking for this information. However, if a VRS user moves or changes his or her IP address, the user must update his or her user profile with the default provider. This will save time, and possibly lives if making an emergency call.

For more information about 10-digit numbering and placing emergency calls, go to www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/trsten-digit.html. For general information about registering for a 10-digit number, visit www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/tendigit-faqs.html.

Relay Users and FairPoint Problems

Numerous FairPoint Communications customers have experienced problems with service since the company took over Verizon in February 2009, such as billing errors, service order delays, and difficulty in reaching FairPoint.

The problems are especially difficult for relay users trying to resolve these issues. If you are a relay user and have a complaint about FairPoint or another regulated utility (telephone, electric, private water company, or cable company) that you are not able to resolve directly, please contact the Vermont Dept. of Public Service's Consumer Affairs Division. The Consumer Affairs Division helps consumers who cannot resolve complaints directly with a utility company.

You can reach the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) by:

- Calling 7-1-1 from your TTY and dialing (800) 622-4496
- Calling (800) 734-8390 TTY
- Sending an e-mail to consumer@state.vt.us

Have ready your name, address, phone number, e-mail address (if available), a description of the problem, and the utility's response when you contacted the company.

Contacting VTRS

UPCOMING EVENTS

(802) 879-6942 TTY
(802) 879-4787 Voice
(802) 879-4831 Fax

Customer Service
(800) 676-3777
TTY/Voice

Or visit our website!
www.vermontrelay.com

January 9: Deaf Club (South Vermont)

February 13: Deaf Club (North Vermont)

March 11: Community Forum (VDHH), 3-5 p.m.

April 10: Easter/Spring Dinner (North Vermont)

May 8: Deaf Club (South Vermont)

June 10: Community Forum (VCDHH), 3-5 p.m.

June 12: Deaf Club (Central Vermont)



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