

New Technology Allows Consumers to Keep Their Alarm Systems Connected Without an Operational Landline

By Paul Eisenstadt

Home telephone services made the top 10 list for what not to buy in 2010 according to SmartMoney.com. After all, ditching your home phone is easier now than ever before, as cell phone companies compete for greater market share and alternatives begin to emerge such as MagicJack or Skype. So where does all this leave your home alarm system, which has traditionally used a landline to call out to your monitoring station. This is where the GSM (Global System for Mobile communication) module comes in.

Having a GSM module in place can provide a primary or back-up plan if your telephone landline is cut or you don't have (or want) a landline to begin with. Remember, cut phone lines can come about when the phone company messes up, weather plays a part, or when lines are intentionally cut by a

thief trying to break into your home. In cases like this, a GSM module provides your best protection. In the past, GSM modules have been offered as an add-on to traditional home alarms, but now more and more systems are being built with this as an internal feature.

Protection Alarms Inc. (www.ProtectionAlarms.com) offers an interactive GSM service through its partnership with Alarm.com. The system not only transmits alarm activity wirelessly to the central dispatch station, but allows the subscriber to log in through web and PDA interfaces to view and control their alarm.

Alarm and non-alarm events like door openings/closings, motion activity, power failures, system arming and disarming, etc. can be reported to you immediately via

email and text-message, based on your customized notification settings. Apps are available for iPhone and Blackberry that connects Protection Alarms customers to their security systems from anywhere.

Consumers can use the app to Arm and disarm their security system remotely, see what doors, cabinets and windows are currently open and where there has recently been motion activity at their property, access a history of all events reported by the security system, including alarms, power failures, doors and windows opening and motion activity, find out immediately when the kids get home from school or the housekeeper arrives or leaves, when the garage door is left open, when the dog walker takes your dog out (is Fido getting the attention he deserves?), when the neighbor comes

over to water your plants and feed your cats or there's a water leak in your basement. You will also know when your system is disarmed (and who disarmed it), your liquor or medicine cabinet opens, the pool gate or home safe is opened. And, you'll know if you forgot to arm your system when you left for work or vacation or if someone attempts to log into your account, and much more!

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ADVERTORIAL

Rosemary & Thyme Community Garden

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recently become unemployed. Taylor is a stay-at-home mom.

Zieska decided to take her newfound free time and her gardening skills and put them to work helping the many in her community who needed it. Taylor, a neighbor who had just moved onto the same block at the time asked how she could help.

So it began.

The lot belongs to Rip Schlocker of San Diego who owns some adjacent unused land. Zieska leases the garden from him for \$1 a day. At present, the garden only takes up a small portion of the lot. But according to Taylor, tons of produce is always blooming. - corn, tomatoes, strawberries, cantaloupe, broccoli...and the list keeps going. The organic crops change by the season and are chosen for high nutritional content. Everything they grow goes to San Fernando Valley food banks.

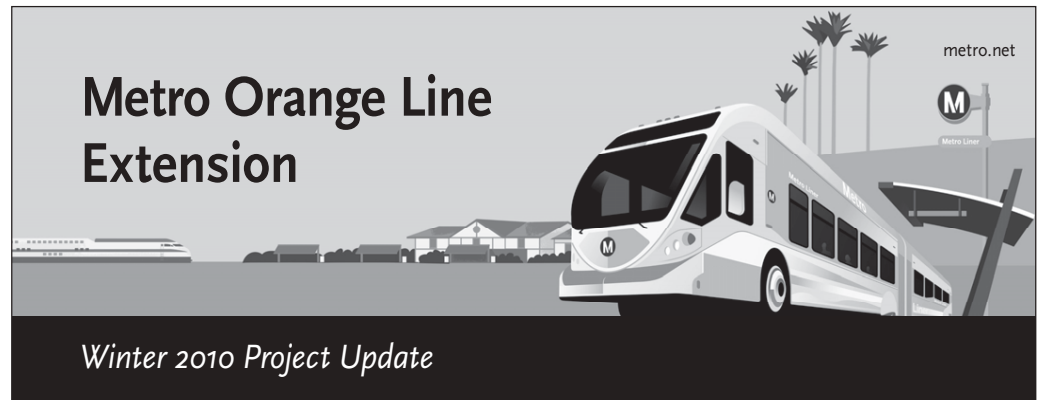
Zieska says the group's next goal is to get a beautification grant from the City of Los Angeles for more trees and shade so they can more easily and comfortably garden. Taylor said they intend to expand their gardening to take advantage of the full plot of land. Currently, the garden has five regular, core participants who all live on the same street. But they need more help.

The garden has enjoyed visits from local schools and help from a local moms' group. But Zieska, Taylor and their neighbors are working to raise more community awareness.

"We always welcome more help," Taylor said with a sigh.

They hope that their fruit tree project won't just help feed the community - but will draw potential volunteers' attention to their project.

Rosemary and Thyme Community Garden is located on Jordan Street between Devonshire and Lassen, off Topanga Canyon Blvd. To get involved, contact Sharon Zieska at 818-700-8940.



Construction is underway to extend the valley's popular Metro Orange Line from the current Canoga Station to Chatsworth.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

The north parking lot was completed November 3, 2009, on time and within budget. The contract for constructing the 4-mile Metro Orange Line Extension is expected to be awarded by the end of January 2010.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS TEAM

Olga M. López and Perla Berry are leading the community relations effort for construction of the Metro Orange Line Extension. The Metro Community Relations Department is responsible for public outreach, stakeholder communication and construction impact mitigation.

As part of these efforts, Community Relations will brief community groups on the project status, disseminate construction notices and ensure that all construction related updates are posted to the project website in a timely manner.

Community Relations will notify the public of work activities, schedules and related anticipated impacts through e-mail and door-to-door distribution in the immediately affected area. To make sure you receive timely information, send an e-mail to molextension@metro.net to be added to the e-mail distribution list.

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY PRESENTATIONS

In anticipation of construction activities along the 4-mile extension, Community Relations will be available to make safety presentations to increase the public's awareness of major construction activities in the local community. Requests for presentations and/or safety materials can be made through the project hotline, 213.922.3668 or via e-mail, molextension@metro.net.

ART ADVISORY GROUP

Each of the 5 stations will feature artwork by California artists. In December 2009, Metro invited community members to participate in the art program as members of the Art Advisory Group. Group members live or work in the project area, have a vested interest in the stations and surrounding community, are active in the arts and are involved in the community. The Art Advisory Group acts as a liaison between the community and the Metro Art program. Members will develop a community profile document—an insider's guide to the neighborhoods along the alignment—as a resource tool for artists, share community resources and information, and serve on an advisory level during the lifetime of the completed work. Representatives will be nominated to serve on the artist selection panels.

CALL TO ARTISTS

Metro is seeking an artist for the public art at each station. Artwork locations include porcelain enamel steel panels and platform floor paving. Deadline for submittals (delivery, not postmark) is 5pm on Friday, March 12, 2010. For information regarding submittal requirements, visit metro.net/art and click on "Artist Opportunities" or call 213.922.4ART.

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