



Case Study



Retirement Community Finds Faster, Frugal Fire Alarm Communications

Moss Landing is one of those well-kept secret “Southern Living” areas most dream about retiring to some day. Located on the Pamlico River, this beautiful 8-acre development offers waterfront luxury along North Carolina’s Inner Banks with proximity to the Intracoastal Waterway. The site features luxury villas and town homes with upscale amenities and a deep-water marina in the historic, waterfront town of Washington, North Carolina.

Villas and “Townes” are 1,526 to 3,210 square feet homes with open architectural floor plans featuring high ceilings, lavish master suites and gourmet kitchens. All boast spectacular riverfront views. The Townes-style buildings are three stories with parking underneath

and elevator service to each level. Phase I of Moss Landing construction is now complete, encompassing five buildings that are already occupied.

Along with the many amenities found in this beautiful development, residents desire a sense of safety for peace of mind. With most on fixed incomes, monthly costs of maintenance and other services must be kept to a minimum. Fire protection is a major consideration for home owners especially in a condominium setting where common walls are shared. To satisfy customer requirements, the developers chose non-proprietary commercial systems that are readily available and cost-effective, with a proven track record of positive results.

In Phase I of the development, commercial fire alarm panels manufactured by Fire-Lite Alarms were used to protect two of the buildings. Like most fire alarm systems, each panel required two phone lines for communications with a central station. Each phone line cost \$60 per month for a yearly total of \$1,440 per panel for both lines. In addition, a pump station located in each building required one dedicated phone line, another \$60 monthly cost, to monitor station failure switches.

To complete the fire alarm installations throughout the remaining three buildings of Phase I and take over system monitoring, developers called on local fire alarm and security dealer, S.C.I. (Solar Creations, Inc.) Technologies of Winterville, N.C. The Developers had originally hired S.C.I. Technologies to install the camera systems and house audio in each residential unit.

Once the five fire alarm panels and additional pump station monitors were up and running, total phone line charges escalated to \$900 per month. This cost would eventually pass to the condominium owners as part of their monthly maintenance fees.



*Moss Landing Retirement Community
Washington, NC*



Shortly after completion of Phase I, one of the developers mentioned the exorbitant telephone charges to S.C.I. Technologies' President, Mike Roberson. Determined to help his customer reduce costs, Roberson researched options and found an Internet communicator, UL (Underwriters Laboratories)-approved for both primary and secondary communications with Fire-Lite Alarms control panels.

The FireWatch™ IP Communicator is listed to ANSI/UL-864 Ninth Edition standards and meets the latest 2010 NFPA 72: National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, section 26.6 requirements titled Communications Methods for Supervising Station Alarm Systems. Designed by Fire-Lite to connect to its panels' existing phone line ports, the IP Communicator was a surprisingly easy change for Roberson's team to make.

"After reviewing the specifications, I was convinced the installation of this little device would translate into big cost savings for our customer," says Roberson. "Costs aside, the added reliability IP monitoring provides is a great bonus."

While standard fire alarm phone dialer systems typically run one supervisory test in a 24-hour period, the FireWatch IP Communicator is polled over the Internet every 90 seconds. Central stations need only a VisorALARM-Plus receiver, which supports up to three destination IP receiver addresses, allowing for additional equipment redundancies and a multitude of configuration options. This unique flexibility enables the configuration of secondary IP receivers for backup or

even clusters of two or more receivers for off-site disaster recovery purposes.

The addition of a 2UD daughter board to the FireWatch IP Communicator gave S.C.I. technicians the option of accessing the panel remotely via the Internet using standard control panel upload/download software readily available from www.firelite.com. Panel history can be downloaded through the panel's IP connection to determine if maintenance is needed, such as cleaning or replacement of smoke detectors.

Roberson's team mounted one IP Communicator in a Fire-Lite IP enclosure beside each fire alarm control panel. The devices are powered by the panel's auxiliary 24-volt power terminals. To simulate two standard, analog telephone lines, the IP device supplies dial tone and 48 Volts DC to both telephone ports.

An auxiliary input for use in monitoring other devices comes standard on the FireWatch IP Communicator device. At Moss Landing, the input was used to monitor pump stations for trouble conditions via the Internet, helping S.C.I. eliminate more costly phone lines.

With this new technology in-hand, Roberson's team had to determine how to get Internet connectivity to each panel. In most applications, such as retail, office, healthcare and even school facilities, a standard IP line is usually present and capable of being shared with the fire alarm. In this case, with construction already complete, S.C.I. went wireless, utilizing wireless routers and endpoints.

As an added benefit to living at Moss Landing, developers have asked S.C.I. to create a VLAN network to allow residents Internet access. Since the FireWatch IP Communicator uses less than 72 bytes for a polling message or alarm event, there is plenty of bandwidth left for other applications.

With the improvements made by S.C.I., Moss Landing residents can enjoy their dream homes and rest easy under the protection of the latest IP fire alarm technology. All-in-all, Roberson succeeded in saving the community more than \$10,000 in, what are now, unnecessary phone line charges.

"After reviewing the specifications, I was convinced the installation of this little device would translate into big cost savings for our customer... Costs aside, the added reliability IP monitoring provides is a great bonus."

*- Mike Roberson
President
S.C.I. Technologies*



One Fire-Lite Place, Northford, CT 06472-1601
USA - Phone: (203) 484-7161 Fax: (203) 484-7118
Canada - Phone: (905) 856-8733 Fax: (905) 856-9687
www.firelite.com

7/2013 ©2013 Honeywell International, Inc.

 **FIRE·LITE® Alarms**
by Honeywell