



# Telephone Topics

## Intercepting Calls Can Help Restore Peaceful Nights

(NAPS)—One new service offered by phone companies may prove to be a ringing success. That service intercepts calls to keep peaceful evenings from being interrupted by unwanted calls.

Most people feel compelled to answer the phone whenever it rings, even if they're in the shower or eating dinner. While Caller ID can help people decide if they want to answer a call, what happens when the caller's name and number don't show up on your Caller ID unit? It might be someone you don't want to talk to, but what if it's an important call you don't want to miss?

A new service provided over telecommunications networks offers some control. Provided as Call Intercept service in the Northeast by Verizon and by other names elsewhere, the service lets you block unwanted calls from telemarketers and others whose numbers don't appear on Caller ID units.

To use Call Intercept, you must subscribe to Caller ID. Calls that appear as "anonymous," "private," "out of area" and "unavailable" on your Caller ID display are diverted by Call Intercept *before the phone rings*.

Callers are advised that you don't accept blocked calls and are asked to say their name and affiliation and hold the line. If callers



**A new service screens out unwanted phone calls before they ring.**

do not identify themselves, your phone does not even ring. If they do, they remain on hold and your phone rings with a distinctive ring. When you pick up, the name is played for you.

You have five options on handling a call. Take it, decline it, refuse a sales call, send the call to voice mail or hear the caller's name again.

"Call Intercept is a great product for customers who receive many anonymous or out of area calls or who gave up on Caller ID because some incoming calls were unidentified," said Debra Swann, Verizon vice-president of consumer product management.

There are various reasons why

some callers' numbers do not appear on Caller ID displays. Callers may block their numbers. Some telephone company networks do not pass along a caller's number to Caller ID units. If the call is collect or person-to-person, the caller's number may not be passed along because the original call was the operator. And calls from certain business lines or equipment don't pass numbers.

VIP callers can bypass Verizon's Call Intercept with a four-digit passcode that you select. When family and friends call from a phone line that doesn't pass along the phone number, they simply dial the passcode they have been given and the call will go through.

If the incoming call is a sales pitch, you can send the caller a message that says you do not accept phone solicitations and request that you be added to their "do-not-call" list.

Call Intercept is now available to Verizon customers in the Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas, Delaware and northern New Jersey. Additional areas will be added in coming months. For more information, visit [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com).

Call Intercept costs \$4 to \$5 a month and may be a handy tool for people who like their privacy and prefer to relax in the evenings.