

"WIRETAPPING, BUGS ON LINES AND LISTENING IN."

Compiled By Forest Ranger

Many phreaks are not very knowledgeable when it comes to wiretapping, bugs, and parties listening in on ones line. For those of you who know a lot about wiretaps and etc. then this file may seem out of place.

Although many phreaks think of legal wiretaps as the most common way for the phone company to check your calling activity, there are others. Under court order, the phone company may attach a "Pen Register" to your phone wires at the central office. The device gives a printout of all calls, local and long distance, going out of your phone including time of day, duration of call, and, of course, the recipient's number. It's used mostly by law enforcement agencies to check who you are calling in hopes that the other party will shed some light on your alleged wrongdoing.

Law enforcement agencies often prefer the Pen Register to an out-and-out wiretap. It takes less work, less manpower (the Pen Register is automatic; the gumshoes just come by the phone company and pick up the printout), and less hassle to obtain a court order for its installation, because it's less of an invasion of privacy than a wiretap.

HOW WIRETAPPING WORKS. Listening to phone calls isn't very difficult to do, although it is clearly illegal. The quickest method wiretappers use is simply to cut into someone's phone line, preferably where the owner can't detect it (near the garage or behind the pole, for example) and wire in their own headset. Then they remove the mouthpiece, so the person being tapped can't detect the wiretapper's breathing or other noise. If a wiretapper can't stick around, he'll use a high-impedance coupling transformer and feed the wire into a tape recorder.

To save tape, most tappers use the type of recorder that records automatically when it hears a voice. Another procedure is to find the right "pair." That's telephone-tapping talk for the two wires that go into your house and that of others in your building or apartment. The boxes that contain pair terminals are called terminal boxes and can usually be found in basements of apartments or office buildings, or occasionally on the outside wall of a building.

A wiretapper typically will have an accomplice call the number being tapped. That puts about 90 volts on the line. The tapper takes two fingers and run them down the rows terminal. When he hits the right phone pair, he feels a jolt.

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Once he's found it, he's got the right phone; a listening device is then attached.

For those who prefer the wireless approach, a "bug" placed in a phone will transmit conversations over short distances. Bugs come in all sizes shapes. A cheap type sometimes goes by the name of "Wireless Microphone." Let's face it; it's a bug. Anyone can buy them at Radio Shack or even some toy stores for less than \$15. It's range is limited, usually 500 to 1,000 feet, but it will fit inside a phone and send a clear signal to an FM radio. Or better yet, it is possible to connect the wireless mike through a high impedance transformer connected to the phone line, and no one has to enter the tapee's house.

A wiretapper also can buy bugs that look like telephone mouthpieces. They're inserted by unscrewing the mouthpiece and replacing it with a souped-up version .

COURT-AUTHORIZED WIRETAPS INSTALLED, 1979.

New Jersey.....	144	Virginia.....	5
New York.....	118	District of Columbia.....	3
Florida.....	63	Nevada.....	2
Maryland.....	23	Hawaii.....	2
Massachusetts.....	22	Rhode Island.....	2
Nebraska.....	21	Delaware.....	2
Connecticut.....	15	New Mexico.....	1
Arizona.....	12	Oregon.....	1
Georgia.....	10		

LISTENING IN. If you own a scanner radio to listen in on police and fire calls, you can check up on your local phone company repair trucks, installers, and lineman, too. Although the radio channels phone companies use vary from area to area, most are assigned one or two of the following frequencies: 151.34 , 451.175 - 451.275, 451.3 - 451.675, 456.175, 456.275 (mobile), 456.300 - 456.675 (mobile), 462.475, 462.525, 467.475 (mobile), 467.525 (mobile). Also, if you want to eavesdrop on callers using conventional mobile phone service, try these frequencies: 158.07 - 158.49 for mobiles and 152.81 - 153.03 for base stations. (All frequencies are in MegaHertz, or MHz.)Remember: It's against the law to divulge the contents of any conversations you may hear, but it's okay to listen.

JUST LISTEN FOR THE BEEP. When can you legally tape a conversation off the phone? It's certainly easy enough to do; it can be accomplished with use of a two-dollar suction cup device, as well as with most models of answering machines. Auhe Federal Communications Commision fequires phone compaines to include

information in their tariffs outlining what is acceptable, and enforcement is left to each local phone company.

State laws differ, but the rule of thumb is that a short beep heard every 15 seconds indicates that the person on other end is recording the conversation. In some states, mutual consent can substitute for the beep tone; you need only ask permission of the other party, and the taping is perfectly legal. Of course, the technology has made it virtually impossible in some cases to detect whether someone is taping (it's easy enough to have a tape recorder going in a room with your speakerphone, and even the most sophisticated devices won't be able to tell the difference), but the penalties for taping your own conversations are minimal. If you are caught, which is difficult in itself, the penalty "MAY" be suspension of phone service.

Third-party wiretapping --taping a conversation of which you are not a part is another story. This is an area in which the federal government takes a great interest. Quite simply, it's a crime under federal and state laws to intercept calls unless you happen to be a party to the conversation or unless you first obtained the consent of one of the parties taking part in the call. Law enforcement officials can listen in on your conversations after having secured the proper court order, but you have to be a hot number to warrant that sort of attention. If you do decide to listen in on your suspected-of-cheating spouse (and the equipment to do it with is not too difficult to come by), be forewarned that for your troubles, you could get five years behind bars and a \$10,000 fine.

Remember wiretapping can be granted by any federal judge. Many phreaks always complain about their line being wiretapped well hopefully the file above has taken care of that.