



# Stay Connected

A NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT SIERRA TEL • MAY 2017

## A Big Tribute to Small Businesses

National Small Business Week is the first week in May. It's a great reminder to think about how much our local small businesses add to this community in terms of jobs, unique products, personal service, and much more.

Sierra Tel encourages you to shop local, spend local, eat local, and enjoy local. If you own a small business, we congratulate you and wish you much success.

### Contact Us

#### SIERRA TEL

##### Oakhurst Office:

49150 Road 426  
Post Office Box 219  
Oakhurst, California 93644

##### Lobby Hours:

Monday - Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm  
Saturday, 10:00am to 4:00pm

##### Mariposa Office:

5151 Bullion Street  
Post Office Box 185  
Mariposa, California 95338

##### Lobby Hours:

Monday - Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm

Telephone Support is available  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
Call 559-683-4611, 209-966-3636  
or 877-658-4611.

##### Visit Us Online:

[www.SierraTel.com](http://www.SierraTel.com)



## IS YOUR GROWING BUSINESS OUTGROWING ITS INTERNET?

No matter what type of business you run, you need an internet plan that works as hard as you and your employees do. Otherwise, you're waiting rather than working.

Sierra Tel offers Internet plans with download speeds over 20 Mbps and upload speeds over 2 Mbps, along with local support and expertise to guide your technology planning.

**CALL 559-683-4611 OR 209-966-3636  
TO GET DOWN TO BUSINESS.**

*Service availability and internet speeds will depend on location. Call us for complete details.*

## Call 811 Before You Dig to Help Prevent Utility Damage

An underground utility line is damaged once every six minutes nationwide because someone decided to dig without first calling 811. This statistic comes from data collected by Common Ground Alliance (CGA), the association dedicated to protecting underground utility lines and the safety of people who dig near them.

Digging without knowing the approximate location of underground utilities can result in damage to gas, electric, communications, water, and sewer lines, which can lead to service disruptions, serious injuries, and costly repairs. There are more than 20 million miles of underground utilities in the United States, according to data compiled by CGA from various industry groups.

To know what's below, always call 811 before digging on your property. That way, local utilities can come out and mark where underground lines are located. Data shows that when you call 811 the appropriate amount of time before digging, you have a less than one percent chance of striking a buried utility line.

**Sierra Tel thanks you in advance for doing your part to help prevent utility damage.**



## Texting and Driving is a Dangerous Combination

According to the National Safety Council, more than 100,000 crashes per year in the United States are caused by people who are texting and driving. What's more, 75 percent of teens say texting and driving is common among their friends. These statistics are a stark reminder of the dangers of multitasking while on the road. Sierra Tel urges you to always stay focused on traffic when you get behind the wheel and to remind the teen drivers in your family to do the same.

**The risks of texting and driving are especially high for teens, who are already the most crash-prone drivers due to inexperience. Consider this:**

- Texting drivers are 23 times more dangerous than attentive drivers.
- Texting while driving is about six times more likely to result in an accident than driving while intoxicated.
- For every six seconds of drive time, a driver sending or receiving a text message spends nearly five of those seconds with his or her eyes off the road. This makes texting the most distracting of all cell phone tasks.
- 51 percent of teens say they text while driving.
- Teen drivers are four times more likely than adults to get into car crashes or near crash events directly related to talking on a cell phone.
- Talking on a cell phone while driving can make a young driver's reaction time as slow as that of a 70-year-old.

There is no text message, email, website, or video that is worth the risk of endangering your life or the lives of others. Whatever it is, it can wait until you reach your destination.

**To learn more about this issue and take the pledge to never text and drive, visit [www.itcanwait.com](http://www.itcanwait.com).**

# How to Successfully Overcome the Challenges of Working from Home

**W**orking from home (whether for your employer or as the owner of a home-based business) has become increasingly common. It's estimated that 63 million Americans will telecommuted in 2016. One driving force behind this growth is the capability and availability of computer and communications technology. This type of work arrangement is also popular because it offers more flexibility over working hours and conditions, keeps overhead costs down, and permits a better work-life balance.

**However, there are potential pitfalls as well. Here are some of the common challenges of working from home and tips to help overcome them:**

## Set Boundaries to Protect Your Work Time

One of the main advantages of working from home — being near family — can be a disadvantage as well. The demands of a household, especially one with small children, are often distracting enough to significantly decrease productivity. It's important to set boundaries. Arrange for childcare if needed, and ask your family to respect your business obligations.

## Avoid Isolation

In a standard business environment, you're around co-workers all day and there are plenty of opportunities for conversation. By contrast, if you work from home, the quiet of an empty house may foster boredom and loneliness. To prevent the negative effects of isolation, make time for face-to-face interactions on a regular basis such as attending meetings of business associations and networking events. You'll want to combine these types of outside activities with social media and online forums related to your job.

## Maintain a Professional Image

In order to be taken seriously when you work from home, you must maintain a professional image whenever customers or colleagues have contact with you. This includes having a phone system that separates home and business calls. It's also important to have a reliable high-speed Internet connection for top efficiency.

**Sierra Tel wants to help you work successfully from home.  
Call 559-683-4611 or 209-966-3636 now for more information.**



## These Quotes About Motherhood Will Make You Smile

Motherhood definitely has its humorous moments and inspires a great deal of laughter (along with those inevitable tears). In honor of Mother's Day, here are a few smile-producing quotes to enjoy:

*You're just like a human napkin for kids, like, they just wipe their face on you and stuff.* – Tina Fey

*If evolution really works, how come mothers only have two hands?*  
– Milton Berle

*A suburban mother's role is to deliver children obstetrically once, and by car for ever after.* – Peter De Vries

*Always be nice to your children because they are the ones who will choose your rest home.*  
– Phyllis Diller

*When my kids become wild and unruly, I use a nice, safe playpen. When they're finished, I climb out.*  
– Erma Bombeck

**Are you smiling yet? Sierra Tel wishes all of you a very Happy Mother's Day!**



## Older Americans Month is in May

The Administration on Aging has announced that the 2017 theme for Older American's Month is "Age Out Loud." This theme is intended to give aging a new voice—one that reflects what today's older adults have to say about aging.

More than ever before, older Americans are working longer, trying new things, and engaging in their communities. They're taking charge, striving for wellness, focusing on independence, and advocating for themselves and others. They expect to continue to live their lives to the fullest, and they're insisting on changes that make that possible.

Technology is playing a big role in enhancing the lives of older Americans, and Sierra Tel is pleased to be part of this. We offer Internet, phone, TV, security, and other services along with helpful local employees to make selecting and using new technology easier.

**To learn more, stop by our office or call 559-683-4611 or 209-966-3636.**

# Quick! Take an Internet Speed Test!

If your Internet connection doesn't seem to be as fast as you'd like, we have a quick tip: Before you call the Sierra Tel office, check your current download and upload speeds on our website:

[speedtest.sierratel.com](http://speedtest.sierratel.com)



Space out the speed tests over a few days, and at varying times of day, to get an accurate measure of your Internet connection. You'll note that most of the focus of these tests is on download speed, which is key to activities such as streaming video. But upload speed can also be important if you share a lot of photos/videos or play online games.

**Once you know the current Internet speeds, call us at 559-683-4611 or 209-966-3636 to talk about next steps. You may have issues to address such as an outdated or poorly located router. Or it might be time to sign up for one of our Internet plans with faster speeds.**

## In an Emergency, Could Your Child Find the Phone?

Picture this: An emergency happens in your home—let's say you're choking or having another medical crisis—and your young child needs to call 911. If there's no landline, your child will have to locate your cell phone (which could be anywhere), unlock it, enter a passcode or tap on the word "Emergency," find the phone icon, get to the keypad, enter 911, and then tap on Call or Send. That's a long list of steps for a child, especially during the stress of an emergency.



By contrast, when there's a landline, your child can get to it without searching. Calling is also easier, since he or she just needs to pick up the receiver and punch in 911. Even if your child can't give your address, a landline enables the 911 dispatcher to quickly locate your exact location.

**Call 559-683-4611 or 209-966-3636 for details on our landline service.**