

Wisconsin Resident Uses Remote Monitor to Protect Home During Harsh Winter Months

Living in a remote location has advantages: few solicitors find their way to the front porch; neighborhood traffic is minimal; and the peace and quiet can be very good for the soul. Many people would agree that these are good things; for example, take Ronald Pierner.

Pierner, a resident of northern Wisconsin, lives on the edge of a national forest not far from Lake Superior. His dirt driveway stretches eight miles from the main road. The trek to pick up the mail is brutal, but the peace and quiet – ah.

Then there is the weather. Winter in northern Wisconsin means snow – and lots of it – more than 100 inches a year in the northern part of the state. The snow is one of the reasons Pierner spends the winter months somewhere much warmer. But being away from his home means he is unable to watch over its contents without help.

“If I wanted to pay for an expensive security company, I wouldn’t be able to find one anyway,” Pierner said. “I just don’t have many choices.”

Instead, Pierner, who raises whitetail deer on his 500-acre property, settled on a remote monitoring system from Sensaphone. The Sensaphone 1104 is designed specifically for use in small businesses, cabins, and vacation homes. It offers built-in monitoring for power failures, temperature, and sound of audible alarms like smoke detectors. Pierner uses it to monitor loss of power in his home. Loss of power in northern Wisconsin means loss of heat, which could quickly turn into frozen pipes and broken water mains.

“I’ve got boilers with in-floor heating and I need power to run the pumps to move the hot water through the house,” he said. “I need to run the boiler and without power I’m in trouble. While monitoring the temperature helps, the power is a better indicator. Even with a backup generator, I only have a certain amount of time to figure out what the problem is and address it.”

From April to early December, Pierner is able to handle any emergencies himself. The remaining four months, he relies on the Sensaphone 1104 to alert him and his friends who watch his property while he is away. He enlists a group of friends, including one who works in law enforcement, to respond when appropriate.

“It calls up to four numbers, including my house in Florida, as well as my plumber and heating guy,” Pierner said. “It will call the first number and say there is a power outage. If it doesn’t get an answer or someone doesn’t press the code, it keeps calling the others on the list and circles back until someone does answer.”

Pierner learned early the system’s value. “I had one situation where the pipe in the toilet closet was repaired and the plumber’s assistant had cracked it while installing it. It held for a short time and then, for some reason, it let go. When I came home a day later, the water was leaking from the bathroom ceiling and did about \$15,000 in damage in one day. Not to mention that the house was torn up for six months while it was being fixed. Now I always leave the house knowing the Sensaphone system is working.”

Pierner said he first discovered Sensaphone remote monitors after buying a vacation home on Padre Island in Texas. “We traveled a lot at the time and having someone check on your house once in a while is just not good enough. I needed something that worked all the time.”

A timely discussion with an employee of the local telephone company alerted him to Sensaphone. “He said he had a device that might work. The price was right for what I needed and compared to what a security firm would cost or the damage that could be done, it was an easy decision.”

“As long as I have a situation where I am away from something that has to be watched, I will use it,” he said. “When my home in Wisconsin was brand new, I had the option of putting in an expensive security system or installing a Sensaphone, which performed the same basic functions and was much easier to maintain. Even with such an advanced security system option, I’ll still use the Sensaphone system.”