

Here is information from our Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) on robocalls. There is a drop-down menu at this link called "Blocking Unwanted Calls:"

https://ago.vermont.gov/cap/information_for_consumers/ I have cut and pasted the content below as a preview. I will ask CAP to make sure everything here is up-to-date, and will let you know if there are any updates (specifically, I wonder if the prices have changed).

Blocking Unwanted Calls

A photograph of a man with reddish hair talking on a black mobile phone. Overlaid on the left side of the image is a dark grey box with white and teal text. The text reads: "SALES CALL, CHARITY SOLICITATION, OR SCAM?" followed by a bulleted list: "• REGISTER YOUR NUMBER WITH THE DO-NOT-CALL REGISTRY TO STOP SALES CALLS", "• FIND OUT HOW MUCH OF YOUR DONATION TO CHARITY GOES TO PAID FUNDRAISERS ON OUR WEBSITE", "• BOUGHT SOMETHING OVER THE PHONE? YOU MAY HAVE 3 DAYS TO CANCEL!", and "• PHONE SCAMS WANT PAYMENT NOW BY CARD OR WIRE TRANSFER - JUST HANG UP!".

SALES CALL, CHARITY SOLICITATION, OR SCAM?

- REGISTER YOUR NUMBER WITH THE DO-NOT-CALL REGISTRY TO STOP SALES CALLS
- FIND OUT HOW MUCH OF YOUR DONATION TO CHARITY GOES TO PAID FUNDRAISERS ON OUR WEBSITE
- BOUGHT SOMETHING OVER THE PHONE? YOU MAY HAVE 3 DAYS TO CANCEL!
- PHONE SCAMS WANT PAYMENT NOW BY CARD OR WIRE TRANSFER - JUST HANG UP!

Illegal scams and telemarketing calls, including recorded "robocalls", are the #1 complaint received at the Vermont Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program and other state and federal consumer protection agencies.

If you are receiving these unwanted calls, there are a number of call blocking options available that you may want to consider. This is an emerging technology, and each method of call blocking has advantages and disadvantages, so be sure to review them carefully before deciding if one is right for you.

Most device blockers currently require phone service Caller ID to be established. In addition to the devices listed below, you may also contact your telephone provider to learn whether it will block unwanted calls, how many numbers can be blocked, and whether there is a fee for that service. Check the Customer Information Guide at the front of your phonebook for this information.

PLEASE NOTE: THE LIST BELOW IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES. THE VERMONT ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY PRODUCT OR SERVICE. PRICES MAY VARY.

Helpful Term Definitions

- Whitelist – A list manually programmed by the consumer for the phone to recognize and accept “safe” numbers.
- Blacklist – Software with a preloaded list of thousands of spam numbers.
- VoIP – Voice over Internet Protocol, such as Skype, Vonage, Magic Jack. VoIP technology uses the internet to provide communications services rather than via the public switched telephone network.
- SMS – short message service or text message (i.e. text messages).
- iOS – iPhone Operating System.

Devices for landline telephones:

- Digitone Call Blocker Plus: Uses black and white list technology. Blocked calls are silenced. – \$93.
- CPR Call Blocker V5000 or V202: Uses black list technology. User can block calls as they come in and program numbers to block. – \$99.
- HQTelecom.com Landline Call Blocker: Requires user to block numbers manually by pressing a “block” button as calls come in. – \$59.
- Sentry Dual Mode Call Blocker: Callers must prove they are legitimate by listening to a recorded message and pressing “0” when prompted. The message is recorded in a British accent, which may cause some callers to think they have reached a wrong number. – \$59.
- CPR Call Blocker Protect: Uses whitelist only- so will block every call not on the list. – \$50-75.
- Telezapper TZ 900: Uses a special tone that tells predictive dialing computers that a number is disconnected. – \$40.
- T-Lock Call Blocker Version 5: Requires Caller ID to be activated. Can block incoming and outgoing phone numbers and calls without an ID. Stores the last 100 incoming and 50 outgoing calls. – \$39.
- Pro Call Blocker Version N2: Can block entire area codes and prefixes. Blocks incoming and outgoing phone calls and calls without an ID. Stores incoming and outgoing call records. Requires password to remove blocked numbers from list. – \$43.

Call-blocking apps for wireless phones:

- Robokiller: Winner of the Federal Trade Commission’s 2015 “Robocalls – Humanity Stikes Back” contest. Calls are analyzed for audio clues that identify whether the caller is a robocall. – Free beta format for smartphones, specifically iPhones, with an Android platform app in development. <http://www.robokiller.com/>
- Check your app store for other available technologies.

See also [The Wireless Association’s web-site](#) for information on options for limiting robocalls received by your wireless phone.

Call-blocking services for VoIP lines (like Skype, Vonage, Magic Jack, Google Voice and similar):

- Nomorobo: Won the Federal Trade Commission's 2013 "Robocall Challenge", the first public contest to develop a robocall blocker. Intercepts and compares incoming calls against black and white lists. Free for VoIP Landlines. <https://www.nomorobo.com>