

VOICE ALERT



DEFINITION A flexible, short-range monitoring system that allows users to place infrared motion sensors at select locations and record their own warnings—when movement is detected, your own voice message will warn you.

Have you ever wished you had an extra set of eyes so you would know when someone is coming up the walk, the kids are too close to the pool, or the dog is on the couch? Voice Alert, from Cross Point Industries, might be just the tool.

Voice Alert combines infrared motion detectors, radio transmissions and digital speech recording technologies into an alerting device that makes announcements in your own voice (or other sound effect) that you custom-record to fit your particular circumstances.

Because it's wireless, there is no hassle involved in running wires for the detectors. Indeed, the ease of setup and configuration is a real plus for this product.

With a claimed range of up to 1,000 feet, Voice Alert should be able to cover all but the largest houses and lots with ease. The kit comes with two transmitters, so you can detect and announce motion in two different areas of the house at the same time. The receiver/speaker has three channels, so if you need additional coverage, you can buy an extra transmitter for that area.

At the recommended mounting height of 7.5 feet, each transmitter covers a triangular area about 40 feet deep and 40 feet wide. At this height, birds and small animals shouldn't trigger the system. If you want to detect your small pets, you can mount



the transmitter close to the ground, with a decrease in range.

The transmitters are gasketed and weather resistant, so they can be used indoors or out. Outdoors, blowing branches or other unintended movement may trip the motion sensor, so the mounting location may be important.

For setup and testing, there is a red LED on the front of the transmitters that flashes when the unit detects motion and transmits. The setup mode also transmits on every detected motion, so it's easy to check the extent of the covered area.

Once setup is complete, you can change a jumper to set the transmitter to operational mode. In operational mode, the transmitter goes to sleep for three minutes after detecting motion and sending a transmission to the receiver unit. Another jumper lets you disconnect the LED. This not only saves battery power, but also keeps anyone in the detection area from seeing the LED flash.

The transmitters use standard 9-volt batteries, which in operational mode, with the LED disabled, should last about a year. The transmitters can be set for any channel, and the receiver can accept signals from more than one transmitter on each channel. With this feature, it's

possible to use two or more transmitters to cover a larger announcement area, if needed.

Inside, the receiver/speaker is powered by a wall transformer and contains another 9-volt battery to power the unit for a couple of hours in a power failure or while you are moving it from room to room. The transmitters are already pre-coded,

one for channel one and one for channel two. Recording the messages for each channel is easy, involving sliding a switch, pressing a button and speaking into the marked "mic" port. You can also record messages of up to 6.5 seconds for each channel. Since they are not often used, the recording controls are located on the back panel of the receiver unit. The front contains the power switch, the volume control, a playback button, and a status light.

There's not much missing from the Voice Alert. It's well designed for its intended use. About the only thing we might want to add is a set of switched outputs on the receiver for each channel, for activating external equipment such as a light when motion is detected.

And, if you are too shy to record your own voice messages, we had great fun finding and recording sound clips off our computer downloaded from the Internet. "Danger, Will Robinson," indeed... **EH**

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WHERE TO FIND IT ■ SEE RESOURCES PAGE 67

THE SCORE

- Install
- Ease of Use
- Reliability
- Expandability
- Overall Value

- 4 → broke the mold
- 3 → playing with the big boys
- 2 → not such a bad buy
- 1 → just plain sad