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Firewall Security | *Part Two in a Series*
By Ryan Walker, OACYS Network Operations Manager

In our February 2004 newsletter we discussed "*What is a Firewall?*" In this second article in a series we'll begin to explore firewalls in more depth and detail.

Could you be unprotected – or even overly protected – with your current firewall setup? This is very possible if you didn't customize your firewall to fit how you use your computer. Many Internet users just browse the web and send and receive email, while others want to share files with their friends, play real-time games, or possibly even host their own websites.

If you fit the first category, your firewall might not be protecting you as much as it could. Any recent firewalling routers or appliances will allow outgoing connections without need for customization, and most software-based firewalls (such as WinXP SP2 and ZoneAlarm) require only minimal initial setup for your browser and email programs – just make sure you don't enable any of those tempting checkboxes that "allow incoming connections!"

Furthermore, if you're on a home or office network that is protected by a firewalling router – and if you want to be able to share files or printers with other computers on your network – most software-based firewalls enable you to restrict those connections to only those computers within your own network.

However, if you fit the category of those who want to plays online games and perhaps host a website, you can have a difficult task ahead of you. Make sure you do *not* enable a router's DMZ option just for hosting a website or game, since that can expose pretty much everything on your computer to access from the Internet.

We would recommend consulting someone with networking experience before trying to configure your router to allow selected incoming connections. Mistakes made in this setup could expose your computer (or all computers on your network) to virus infections and even Internet fraud.

Also, even if you have a firewall configured correctly, make sure to check for and maintain all security updates for your operating system and software, otherwise all of your firewall security efforts could be in vain.

Alpine Tower Now Active
Construction on our Alpine Tower has been completed and its antennas are now active. Surveys and installations are currently in progress for portions of Alpine Village, Camp Nelson, Cedar Slope, Pierpont Springs, and Sequoia Crest. For more information please contact our office, or simply click any of the Wireless links on our website to place a reservation for a free survey.

Whatever It Takes

When the weather gets cranky and there's not enough sunshine for the solar power systems used at our remote tower sites, after a few days the batteries need to be recharged.

We're now testing new automated backup generators, but in the meantime getting up to those sites has lately been a challenge. The trails are rough going for 4WD pickups even in the summer, but when they're soaked the clay and mud make them impassable, sometimes even for quad ATVs – we tumbled one of those down a steep slope recently.

On a few occasions it's even been necessary to hike up and back, which in the rain and fog is quite an adventure. But the alternative is that customers with service from those towers would eventually go down, and we simply won't settle for that. Like the old post office motto, "neither rain nor snow

WIRELESS SERVICE AREAS

New customers in Yokohl Valley and Balch Park say service is GREAT!

- Porterville
- Springville
- Pleasant Valley
- River Island
- Globe Drive
- Strathmore
- Terra Bella
- Lindsay
- Exeter
- Visalia
- Yokohl Valley
- Camp Nelson
- *In progress*
- Success Valley
- Richgrove

NEW! A new closer tower for Exeter, Badger Hill Estates, and Woodlake is coming soon!

• **VIRUSES STOPPED BY OCS SYSTEM: 1,060,197** (last 30 days 12,904)
• **SPAM BLOCKED BY OCS SYSTEM: 22,550,357** (last 30 days 690,250)

OFFICE HOURS • MON-FRI 8AM-8PM • SAT 9AM-5PM • CLOSED SUN
767 NORTH PORTER ROAD • PORTERVILLE CA 93257 • 559-781-4123

Whatever It Takes

Continued from Page One

nor dark of night…" – (we've done that too) – shall interrupt service to our customers, we're committed to doing whatever it takes.

On one occasion our Lindsay tower needed recharging but we had no generator, charger, or fuel up there. None of our vehicles could make the climb, and hiking with such loads (although accomplished once) was really impractical – not to mention slow and exhausting.

The only remaining alternative was to fly, despite the weather. Company founder Ted Olson flew helicopters in Vietnam and still holds a commercial license, so one stormy Sunday afternoon in January he rented a Bell Jet Ranger from long-time OCS customer San Joaquin Helicopters in Delano and flew the needed equipment to the top.

Once our new backup generators are in place we'll continue the story. How to get them there while they're still needed this season is a current challenge, which may call for flying again … *whatever it takes!*

Meet the Team
Angie Lane, Customer Service Technician

Angie Lane joined OCS in 1996 and is nearing her ten-year mark. Public use of the Internet was still new at that time, and Angie's real value to the company then was her experience in working for one of our customers who used our specialized agricultural software for pesticide use reporting. With that background she started training in our new Internet operations, while at the same time assisting with customer support for users of our ChemTrak® software.

It wasn't long before the Internet really began to explode, and everyone in the company began to focus more on support in that direction than in any other. Angie is now our ranking member of "FOG," as we affectionately refer to our Front Office Gang.

Angie and husband Bob have four children, and the flexibility of the family-oriented schedule at OCS has been very useful as she's juggled work, home, school, 4H, and countless other activities over the years.

Our customers appreciate Angie's dedication and her over-the-top commitment to helping with their problems … yet another great example of why our OCS team is second to none.

NATIONWIDE OCS SERVICE for
FRIENDS • FAMILY • BUSINESS

With over 2,500 free local access numbers across the country, you can keep quality OCS dialup service when you travel or even if you move. Or recommend it to your friends, family, and business associates across the country and earn referral credits at the same time! To check for available numbers in different areas of the country, just click "Nationwide Numbers" or "Access Numbers" on our website. New accounts may sign up using the handy "Subscribe Online" procedure on our home page. Call us for more information!

Fan Mail

• *"We can't believe the difference from dialup to wireless and wish we would have switched a long time ago, online college courses are now an option. I have nothing but compliments for OCS, everyone has been so kind and professional."* -CM, 1/05

• *"I had major virus and spyware problems using a cheap Internet service. I'm switching back to OCS, I never had these problems with you!"* -YC, 9/04

OACYS INTERNET SERVICE PLANS

| Plan Name | Average Speeds | | | B-M-W[1] | One-Time Fees | | | Monthly Service |
	Min	Typ	Max		Service Activation	Install/ Configure	Equipment Deposit	
1 Bandwidth-Mailboxes-Webspace (see notes)								
DIALUP	26K	40K	53K	1-5-5	25.00	-	-	24.95
Accelerator	Typically 2-5X faster			-	-	-	-	+5.00
WIRELESS | STANDARD 2.4 GHz								
24 Basic	125K	500K	750K	10-5-5	25.00	100.00	200.00	49.95[2,3]
24 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	200.00	79.95[2,3]
24 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	200.00	129.95[2,3]

[2] Add $10 per month amplifier fee for locations beyond 5 miles from nearest tower
[3] Add $10 per month for locations in designated remote service areas

WIRELESS | SPECIAL CASES 900 MHz (where available)								
900 Basic	125K	375K	750K	5-5-5	25.00	100.00	200.00	59.95[4,5]

Special "mission impossible" cases are those where obstacles such as trees or buildings between the wireless tower and the customer site normally make wireless service impossible. OACYS can now use new technology to provide service in some cases, sending signal around or through the obstacles. Individual circumstances will vary and this plan may not be available from all towers. Our free site survey will determine whether 900 service may be feasible when standard 24 service is not.

[4] Add $10 per month amplifier fee for locations beyond 5 miles from nearest tower
[5] Add $10 per month for locations in designated remote service areas

WIRELESS | MISSION CRITICAL 5.8 GHz (where available)								
58 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	200.00	99.95
58 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	200.00	129.95
58 Professional	500K	2M	3M	25-25-25	25.00	100.00	200.00	159.95
58 Corporate	750K	3M	4M	30-30-30	25.00	100.00	200.00	199.95
58 Enterprise	1M	4M	5M	40-40-40	25.00	100.00	200.00	249.95

Notes. All plans include automated central email virus scanning, email spam filtering, and website parental controls. Some plan types permit webspace for personal use only. Wireless installation and deposit package may be paid in installments upon request. All speeds are symmetrical (same for upload and download) within the OACYS network only. All plans terminate at OACYS Porterville headquarters and transport to the Internet via dual T3s over dedicated OC12 fiber optic circuit. All plans subject to change without notice. Pricing and terms are current at the date of this newsletter and supersede previous versions. Please check with our office for additional detail regarding any of our Internet service plans.

I Didn't Know That!

OCS provides "A-to-Z" computer technology services:

• Complete computer service and repair shop

• Broad variety of Internet access plans and packages

• Professional website design, development, and hosting

• Professional programming and custom application development

• eCommerce and business groupware solutions

• Computer and Internet technology consulting

• Secure branch office inter-networking

• Internet-based "VOIP" telephone services

• iSuite of online utility applications

To set Account Preferences or make Payments Online, click UserAdmin on our website