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LocalTalk: PhoneNET and Surge Suppression Information

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Farallon, in its PhoneNET connector documentation, recommends that users not connect a LocalTalk connector directly to a twisted-pair backbone via a PhoneNET to LocalTalk adapter cable. The reason is that LocalTalk connectors don't have sufficient surge protection when connected directly to the phone line. The documentation says that the first connector out of the wall should be a PhoneNET connector. Then, it's safe to branch LocalTalk from that using the adapter cable.

Farallon incorporates a proprietary transformer and surge protection system into their connector modules. They do this because phone wire is not shielded and is subjected to RFI and EMI. Because LocalTalk cable is shielded, the same level of surge protection is not required in LocalTalk connectors. Connecting LocalTalk cable to PhoneNET via an adapter is not recommended, because it reduces the shielding effect at the cable. There are other reasons, including differences in impedance. Farallon's suggestion correctly interfaces phone wire to LocalTalk with a module that provides some form of surge suppression.

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