

Road phones safer than ever

May 3 2012

New self-lighting and self monitoring telephones on road highways and other key locations can reduce the need for maintenance significantly and, more importantly, save lives.

Telephones are an integral part of [safety measures](#) in the [transport](#) sector, with telephony equipment being increasingly installed on all major highways, tunnels, rail lines and other transport routes. The EU-funded Safephone project aimed to improve emergency communication from these locations.

In line with the latest research on transport safety, Safephone proposed cost-efficient, high-tech solutions by developing remote self-powered [telephone](#) sets based on piezoelectric devices with embedded fibre-optic technology. Such a telephone would be able to illuminate itself in low-light conditions in order to guide people seeking help and would also send feedback about its condition.

Through such a design, the project has virtually eliminated routine maintenance, contributing to the safety of technicians in hazardous conditions. It also doubled the reliability of emergency telephones by creating more efficient equipment casing, which was also designed to be much more recyclable. Moreover, the system enabled automatic alerts of problems with telephone equipment via SMS or email within the hour, ensuring minimal downtime and pinpointing technical problems more efficiently.

Through improved self diagnosis and self illumination, the new phones

will advance the quality of highway emergency telephone systems considerably. The technology also has the potential to be used in other applications such as offshore installations. The end result is expected to be a notable increase in saved lives on highways and in other transport environments.

Provided by CORDIS

Citation: Road phones safer than ever (2012, May 3) retrieved 11 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-05-road-safer.html>

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