



# How to Become an EPO FRS Operator!

Amal Moulik  
Christine Monsen  
Rossmoor EPO Communications Team  
[epocomms@gmail.com](mailto:epocomms@gmail.com)

# Why Become an FRS Operator?

- To help yourself and your neighbors during an emergency
- To report on the status of your entry/street following a disaster/emergency
- To provide a way to reach professional first responders if 911 is overwhelmed and cell phone towers are down

# Why Spend 30 Minutes Networking on Saturdays?

- Familiarity
  - With your FRS radio and how to use it on the network
  - With the voices of your neighbors
- Practice
  - Sharing the network with other FRS operators
  - Following instructions from the Net Control Operator (NCO)
  - Using your personal identifier: first name, street, entry (or no entry)
  - Finding the best location to call from

# Standard Controls of FRS Radios

PERMANENTLY ATTACHED ANTENNA



PUSH TO TALK BUTTON (PTT)



POWER/MENU BUTTON



BUILT-IN MICROPHONE



SPEAKER



# FRS Radio Icons and Operations



- These radios typically use either rechargeable battery packs, AA or AAA batteries. Make sure that you have extra batteries for your radio, since you may not be able to recharge your battery pack during an emergency
- The presence of large buildings, trees, etc., may reduce their range
- Please refer to the manual for your radio (downloadable online)

# Changing Channels on FRS Radio

- Turn radio on
- Press MENU Button ONCE to enter Setup mode
- Large Channel Number begins flashing – use Up and Down buttons to set desired channel
- Press PTT (Push to Talk) button on side of radio to exit Setup

# FRS Radio Icons

Low Battery  
Icon

KEY LOCK  
Icon

Transmit  
(TX) Icon

Transmit  
Power Level  
Icon

Channel  
Number

Recieve  
(RX) Icon



# During a Local Event

- CERT will not be activated if the emergency does not affect a wide-area
- Turn FRS radio to channel 8
- Use this channel to inform others if you have “eyes” on the situation



# Problem/OK

- No longer RED/GREEN, now PROBLEM/OK
- PROBLEM: Resident injuries, structural damage, blocked access
- OK: Entry/Street does not need assistance
- DO NOT call in OK until the PROBLEM areas have reported!

# During a Large-Area Emergency or Disaster

- CALL 911 to report all life-threatening situations
- Turn to channel 8 and LISTEN for announcements from CERT
- ASSESS the status of your entry/street with your EPO Coordinator and/or EPO team
- Determine if your area has a PROBLEM or if it is OK

**DO YOU KNOW  
WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1?**



- **Any crime in-progress (robbery, burglary, prowler, fights, etc.)**
- **Any other life threatening situations (traffic accident with injuries, etc.)**
- **A serious medical emergency (chest pains, seizures, bleeding, etc.)**
- **Any type of fire (structure, vehicle, brush, etc.)**

# The Process In Rossmoor

- In an emergency, all FRS operators should tune to Channel 8 and listen for directions from CERT Control, who will provide information about the emergency or disaster and alert FRS operators when CERT is ready to receive reports
- When directed to do so by CERT Control, change the channel to either 12 or 13, depending on where you live. FRS operators living north of Stanley Dollar Drive would choose channel 12 and those south of Stanley Dollar Drive would turn to channel 13
- Listen and wait your turn to speak. Then say, for example, “Control, this is Amy, Oakmont Drive Entry X” and wait to hear Control say “Amy, go ahead” before speaking
- It is critical to keep your radio on for the duration of the emergency, so that you can be contacted if additional information or assistance is needed from you

# Simplifying the Reporting Process

- After carefully assessing the emergency or disaster, take a moment to think about how to communicate it accurately and only report relevant information.
- FRS operators follow established reporting guidelines: **Who**, **What**, and **Where**. They then **wait for confirmation** to ensure that CERT has received and recorded the information accurately.

**WHO:** First name, street and Entry number (if any) *where you live*

**WHAT:** Major injuries, Significant building damage & Blocked access

**WHERE:** Exact location of the incident

# Wireless Radio Etiquette

## **GOLDEN RULES OF COMMUNICATING:**

- A Wireless Radio is not a Telephone!
- When **YOU** talk, you can't hear
- When **YOU** talk, no one else can talk
- If **EVERYONE** talks, **NOBODY** understands
- We listen, speak clearly and get the message across using few words
- We organize our thoughts before transmitting. When you are ready to transmit press the Push To Talk (PTT) button, also known as the Plan To Talk button on the side of the radio.

# Wireless Radio Etiquette

- Reports of PROBLEMS (major injuries, significant building damage, and blocked access) always go before OK reports
- We share a common radio channel. Two people can't talk at the same time. One person, **Control**, directs who speaks first
- To initiate communication, we contact Control, "Control, this is Amy Oakmont Drive Entry X". Control responds with "Go ahead Amy," or "Stand by....,"
- While communicating, we frequently use "**Copy**" to acknowledge, "**Repeat**" to request say again, "**Over**" after each transmission and "**Clear**" to end this report. (The FRS operator keeps her/his radio on)

# Want to Help Out?

- Become an FRS radio operator and/or EPO coordinator or assistant
- Stay on for the full 30 minutes on Saturday EPO networking sessions
- Relay if a caller is not being heard by the Net Control Operator (NCO)
- Get trained as the NCO so you can step in if needed
- Participate in future EPO/CERT training/drills about how to report PROBLEM situations



# Need FRS Training?

- Contact Amal and Christine at [epocomms@gmail.com](mailto:epocomms@gmail.com) to set up a session
- Make sure that you are an EPO member so you get announcements about future training sessions on the FRS radios
- Join drills with CERT once they are up and running, and we can gather together

# Thank You for Volunteering as an FRS Operator!

Thanks to John Trinterud and Steve Adza for establishing the FRS radio networks here in Rossmoor and for their long years of stellar service

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