

FAMILY RADIO SERVICE (FRS)

If landline and cell phones go pfffft! in an emergency situation, FRS 2-way radios are the best way to stay in touch with neighbors and get timely information, like road closures, evacuation orders, etc. TCEP has demonstrated that these radios can be useful in Topanga.

You can buy a pair of radios for under \$50. Most come with FRS and GMRS frequency capabilities. GMRS requires a FCC license for regular use. FRS is free to use. They all come with sub-channel and various privacy options which are nice for personal use but NOT for emergency use.

Here's what you need:

- Range of at least 1 to 2 miles.
- 14 channels. Neighborhood Networks broadcast on channels 8-14 (FRS channels), with channel 7 (GMRS) used by TCEP to broadcast updates at top of each hour during major disasters when TCEP is fully activated.

USING FRS RADIOS DURING A DISASTER SITUATION

- FRS radios work best in a "line of sight" environment. A small change in your location may help your reception.
- Turn off all sub-channel codes, privacy filters, interference codes, noise filtering and call tones, all of which can hamper your ability to monitor broadcasts in an emergency.
- Do not use the call button.
- Turn off the end of transmission talk confirmation tone if your radio has that option.
- In a life-threatening emergency, CALL 911, then notify your NN Radio Contact. Do not rely solely on FRS radio communications for life or death situations!
- Stay on your Neighborhood's assigned channel unless instructed otherwise.
- Batteries! Talking (transmitting) will use up batteries quickly. Listening and monitoring uses less battery power. Have plenty of extra batteries available at all times.

RADIO ETIQUETTE AND PROCEDURES

- Each neighborhood should have one primary and at least one backup "NN Radio Contact." Your NN Radio Contact is always the lead operator on your neighborhood's assigned channel. You must follow the leadership of your NN Radio Contact for this system to work.
- During a major emergency, at the top of each hour TCEP will broadcast an information update to all NN Radio Contacts on channel 7. At approximately 15 minutes past the hour, NN Radio Contacts will relay that information to their neighborhood on the neighborhood's assigned channel.
- Listen before speaking. Your questions may have been asked/answered already. Orderly communication is absolutely CRITICAL in any emergency situation. If more than one person transmits at the same time, neither one may be heard.
- When someone transmits a message directly to you, repeat what was said briefly when they are finished. This confirms receipt of the message and lets those who can only hear one of the operators know what the complete radio transmission was.
- To start transmitting when there is no voice traffic on the channel, say something like:

(Non-emergency example)

"Calling any station, this is (your name) in (location)."
Wait to be recognized before continuing.

(Life or property-threatening emergency example)

"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, this is (your name) in (location)."
Wait to be recognized before continuing.