

## Communicating During an Emergency!

First, the bad news. In an emergency, you may not have ANY two-way communications! All your usual ways of talking to people may not work.

### Telephones and Internet

- **Satellite phones** are likely to work as long as your end has power.
- **Satellite Internet** is likely to work, if you have 110 VAC electrical power.
- **Cell phone** networks may be totally busy. *You probably can still send text messages for a short time. Learn to text!*
- **Cell phones** may not work if the cell phone towers run out of power.
- **Cell phones** may not work if the government turns them off so terrorists cannot coordinate their actions with cell phones.
- **Portable devices** such as smart phones, tablets, etc. - see Cell Phones.
- **Telephone landlines** may be totally busy, but may be the last to go in a power outage. They have battery power at telephone substations.
- **Internet access** may disappear if electrical power is out. Even if you have emergency generator power, your Internet servers may not.
- **Skype** or **VOIP** lets you make phone calls on the Internet on your computer.

### Radio

Line-of-sight means your transmitter can "see" the radio to which you're transmitting - 1 mile to several miles. It includes FRS, GMRS, MURS, and CB. Decide in advance what band to use in an emergency and when you'll try to call.

- **FRS** is 7-channel, low-power, short-range, and better than shouting.
- **GMRS** is typically for business use, likely to be totally busy.
- **MURS** is 5-channel no-license radio, not heavily used. Probably good for two-way communications over a few miles in an emergency.
- **Marine radio** is good only for ship stations and ship-related coast locations.
- **CB radio** is 40-channel no-license radio, used by truckers, etc. Likely to be totally busy in an emergency. Channel 9 is an emergency channel.
- **Ham radio** requires licensing, can be line-of-sight or over the horizon, and most equipment will work on 12 volts DC. This is your best and most \$\$\$ option.
- In an emergency where life or property or are at stake you can transmit on any frequency with any amount of power, licensed or not.
- Do not rely on the summaries above as the best information available.

Technology is changing constantly. There's more to it than just one page!