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.
- <u>Satellite Internet</u> is likely to work, if you have 110 VAC electrical power.
- <u>Cell phone</u> networks may be totally busy. <u>You probably can still send text</u> messages for a short time. <u>Learn to text!</u>
 - · Cell phones may not work if the cell phone towers run out of power.
- <u>Cell phones</u> 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.
- <u>Telephone landlines</u> may be totally busy, but may be the last to go in a power outage. They have battery power at telephone substations.
- <u>Internet access</u> may disappear if electrical power is out. Even if you have emergency generator power, your Internet servers may not.
 - · <u>Skype</u> or <u>VOIP</u> 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.
- <u>GMRS</u> is typically for business use, likely to be totally busy.
- <u>MURS</u> 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.
- <u>CB radio</u> is 40-channel no-license radio, used by truckers, etc. Likely to be totally busy in an emergency. Channel 9 is an emergency channel.
- <u>Ham radio</u> requires licensing, can be line-of-sight <u>or</u> 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. Don't abuse this privilege.
- 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!

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