



How would you communicate with friends, family or important services if your normal communications tools were not available?



When All Else Fails - Ham Radio Works!

Modern society takes our electric supply and communications tools for granted. They are reliable and efficient. But what if you lose power and find that the phone lines and internet services are out? When that happens the cell phone services, even if working, may become overloaded and useless.

In Maine, these problems are usually associated with blizzards and ice storms. In these situations, how would you get an important message to someone?

In times of emergency, the Amateur Radio Service can provide the means for individuals to communicate when the normal methods are either unavailable, inadequate or are overloaded. Amateur radio operators, also known as hams, have been providing this type

of service for 100 years and it is available to everyone, anytime, free of charge. Hams have provided emergency communication services in many minor to moderate emergencies such as our periodic ice storms along with major events such as Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy.

Amateur radio operators have several ways of using time-tested methods for delivering messages. This may be done using radio relays or by using a combination of radio and the internet (if the internet is available at the recipient's location). Your message could be of an emergency nature or it could be a "we're okay" message to a family member or friend. The message can be sent to someone elsewhere in the state or across the country.



Methods that Hams Use to Send Your Message

Hams make use of two primary systems for sending messages to distant locations: the National Traffic System (NTS) and the Winlink radio-email service. Sometimes, both may be used as they are capable of working together. The NTS is comprised of a full-time network of volunteer operators who handle personal messages on a 24/7 basis. The NTS is radio only (no internet). Addressing is by name, postal code and mailing address. Messages are routed to an operator who lives near to the addressee and may be delivered by any of a number of methods including telephone, postal service, email or in person. A special format is used by NTS operators for tracking and quality control. Messages should be brief: 25 words or less. Since the NTS relies on manual processes for the relays and delivery, the time for a message to reach a recipient is about comparable to sending a letter through the Post Office.

The Winlink system consists of specially equipped client stations that send email-like messages to relay stations that have internet access. This is the fastest method of transmission and, to the recipient, it looks like a regular email. It requires that the recipient has a working email account and the sender knows the email address of the recipient. As with the NTS, this system is also supported by volunteers and is operational 24/7.

ARRL — the national association for Amateur Radio™

RADIOGRAM

| NUMBER | PRECEDENCE | HX | STATION OF ORIGIN | CHECK | PLACE OF ORIGIN | TIME FILED | DATE |
|--------|------------|----|-------------------|-------|-----------------|------------|--------|
| 148 | W | C | KBITCE | 13 | OWLS HEAD ME | 1950Z | JAN 24 |

TO: FRED TRUEBLOOD
99 PALOMA RD
SARATOGA SPRINGS NY 12866

PHONE NUMBER: 518 555 1214

E-MAIL:

THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT

AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____

NAME _____ E-MAIL _____

STREET _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|-------------|---|------|
| EVERYONE | SAFE | HERE | x | ONLY |
| SLIGHT | PROPERTY | DAMAGE | ^ | DO |
| NOT | BE | (CONCERNED) | | |

BETTY

| FROM | DATE | TIME | TO | DATE | TIME |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| REC'D | | | SENT | | |

This message was handled at no charge by a licensed Amateur Radio operator whose address is shown in the box at right above. No compensation can be accepted by a "ham" operator. A return message may be filed with the "ham" delivering this message to you. Further information on Amateur Radio may be obtained from ARRL Headquarters, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111 or www.arrl.org

The ARRL is the national association for Amateur Radio and the publisher of QST magazine. One of its functions is promotion of public service communication among Amateur Radio operators. To that end, the ARRL has organized the National Traffic System for daily nationwide message handling. 1300 2/11

How to Send a Message

You don't need to be concerned with how the message will be sent but you do need to provide the ham radio operator with a sufficient amount of information. Details include:

- **The Addressee:** If the addressee is an individual at their residence we will need their name, full address (or as complete as possible), phone number and (optional) email address. If the message is going to someone at a shelter or hospital, the name of the facility, location and addressee's name will be required.
- **The Importance of the Message:** The ham will help you categorize the importance or priority of the message. This would normally be *Welfare*. Other categories include *Emergency*, *Priority* and *Routine*.
- **The Message Text:** This should be limited to 25 words with no contractions.
- **Signature:** Your name, address and phone number.
- **Handling:** Indicate if you want a reply or confirmation of receipt. The radio operator may ask some other questions to ensure that the best route for the message will be used. Please note that messages coming out of a disaster area have priority over incoming messages.

Please note that messages sent by ham radio can not contain confidential information (think of what you would put on a postcard) nor be business related.

Getting Your Message to a Ham

Preparation before you need this service:

- Don't wait for a real disaster or communications outage to happen.
- You can find out who your nearest participating ham radio operator is by calling the Knox County Emergency Management Agency at 207-594-5155.
- Send a practice message to someone you know! It's free, educational and gives our operators practice.

During a disaster or outage of services:

- If you are in a shelter or hospital, they will know how to route your message to a ham radio operator.
- Otherwise: walk or drive if conditions permit.
- Some hams monitor FRS/GMRS Channel 1 or Marine VHF. Check with your local ham operator to know if these options are available.
- Monitor the Knox County ham radio repeaters on your scanner: 147.060 MHz FM (primary) or 145.490 MHz (backup). Knox County hams may generally be heard every evening at 8:00 PM. During an emergency, listen at the top of each hour. If the repeaters are out of service, you may monitor 147.540 MHz. If you have a short wave radio, you can monitor the Maine Amateur Radio Emergency Service frequency 3940 kHz lower side band (LSB). This frequency is always active daily at 5:00 PM and communications will be more constant during emergencies.

For more information about this program please email us at knoxhams@ballyhac.com. Please also use this email if you are a ham and are interested in participating in this program. If you are not presently a ham but would like to learn about licensing, feel free to contact us.

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| My closest participating ham | |
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<http://knoxcountymaine.gov/ema>

Knox County ARES/RACES-CERT

PenBay Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.penbayarc.org>



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