

Alternative Communication Technique

The following narrative is a proposal that not only offers those interested in learning a new skill, but is an opportunity to increase your personal communications capability. This alternate capability can not only be fun, be a low cost home intercom system, but also offers a communication technique that in an emergency could save not only your life but the lives of personal love ones, family and friends.

We are all familiar with the words walkie talkie. You can buy these radios at your local Walmart, Best Buy, Staples, Harbor Freight, Amazon and many more places. They typically range in price from fifteen to several hundreds of dollars. However in this presentation the focus will be on a unit that cost \$30. Radios in this price category can do amazing things, because of today's modern technology. The walkie talkie radio development can be likened to the improvements in cell phone technology over the past decade. It is suspected that if and when the average citizen becomes aware of what these new radios can do, that a large percentage will be buying a couple to have handy around the house. They are also handy for the work place or in the car when the family goes grocery shopping, to the beach, or possibly just hiking in their favorite state or national park. I know several Vermont skiers that wouldn't go skiing without one of these units in hand including myself.

My personal favorite use for these radios is an intercom system in my home, garage, and man cave. Without exaggeration, as an intercom system in my home they are used several times a day, have saved many hours of travel time between my unattached garage and house and simplified my life immensely. However because of their communication range capability they can also be used in an emergency neighborhood communication scheme, which once setup could have benefits we haven't even thought of yet.

To mention a few of the capabilities, they typically can monitor more than one radio frequency at a time. Most can be used as scanners to local fire and police departments. Many have the standard FM radio band receiving capability, while some actually have the capability of listening to Shortwave Radio including the CB band. They typically have a two way communication range of several miles unit to unit or to a group of units. A license is not needed to use them but they also can be registered with the FCC, without requiring any type of test, to be used with extended capabilities that can reach 30 or 40 miles through the use of repeaters.

There is another use for these devices and that is as Amateur Radio hand held ham units. Now this is an area of usage that some will inevitably want to explore because then the capabilities of these radios can be expanded 10 fold compared to what already has been mentioned. The goal of this article is to promote an alternative communication technique regardless if there is or is not an interest in ever becoming an Amateur Radio operator. However it is the Amateur Radio hobby that has promoted these walkie talkies to become as powerful as they are today and still be available for the average citizen to use. If you can operate a cell phone, you can learn to operate one of these walkie talkies radios.

There are two paths that can be explored in using these radios. The first and most important path is to established a local community network that allows for local communication between neighbors and neighborhoods should cell phones and the internet go down. However, if there was an emergency, having these radios and a local communication system set up would be of paramount importance. The second path of use would be as mentioned above, an inexpensive intercom system, personal use for

convenience and fun, in addition to being an emergency communication tool should one ever be needed. Considering the current times we live in what a wonderful tool to have handy.

A group in the 'Health Freedom Network' and myself are offering to help coordinate and setup these local communication neighborhood networks via both local presentations and via Zoom. There will be no charge for this service. The goal is to help communities with an alternative communication techniques and an opportunity to get to know your neighbors and much more.

As mentioned previously "Repeaters" can be used to enhanced the communication range of these radios. Amateur Radio can be used to enhanced even further the communication range along with the ability to pass traffic via more sophisticated communication techniques. The word "traffic" in Ham Radio lingo means messages similar to emails and text messaging but not limited to just those protocols. It also can refer to digital and voice communication messages as well.

As for Amateur Radio interested persons a few licensed amateurs and myself are willing to sponsor Amateur Radio classes for the entry level license. Entry level is defined as a Technician Class license. Please believe that anybody can get one of these licenses because my grandsons both took this FCC test when they where only 9 and 11 years old. This license class is something like having a motorcycle license. Once you have it, whether you ever get a motorcycle or not, you will always be allowed to legally drive one. The course will be free but the government wants \$35 from you to take the test. Amateur Radio Clubs around the state sponsor giving these test several times a year.

The ultimate goal is to expand the local radio network, which I will now refer to them as nodes so the nodes can be linked together with more sophisticated radios and be independent of power loss across the state. There are several options on how to setup these radio system through both Citizen Band (CB) technology and Amateur Radio technology. CB does not require a license that you have to be tested for. However the entry level Amateur Radio Technician License offers capability that is 10 fold better than just using CB technology. Both options are viable techniques and it is hoped each community will produced at least one individual interested in being a node host. More on "Alternative Communication Techniques" will follow via local presentations and Zoom.

Contact Steve via email at N1QDT@aurorasky.net or view the <https://www.aurorasky.net/html/radio.html> website for more information.

Be well and respectfully,
Steve