



Tualatin CERT Forming Neighborhood Radio NETS for Emergencies

Tualatin CERT members are developing a neighborhood level radio network (Net) to provide information and support to residents at their homes during emergencies. Power outages and weather events can threaten our personal safety. Using inexpensive radios and practicing their use with neighbors and CERT radio teams, the Nets can provide the WHO-WHAT-WHEN-WHERE-HOW information that will help us to get through the emergency.

Tualatin, and our neighboring communities, have experienced small and regional interruptions of power and travel that have caused lengthy road closures and home damage. The January 2024 ice storm, the December 2022 ice storm, and others in previous years have lasted from days long to a week or more for some. Cellular phone networks are a lifeline and but are nonfunctional when overloaded or when power is off for extended periods. Whether local or city-wide, neighborhood radio networks, using inexpensive handie-talkie (HT) radios, can be an invaluable information resource.

Tualatin CERT is starting to build out our radio networks to include inexpensive two-way radios. We will support both FRS and GMRS type radios. The Family Radio Service (FRS) is a walkie-talkie that is a reliable person-to-person system that is inexpensive and can be heard from nearby. For longer distances, The General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) is another HT radio with more range and more channels but does require a license to use. This latter class of radio can use relays (repeaters) allowing neighborhoods to share information with others further away. Either type can talk person-to-person across city blocks.

We would like to link up with Tualatin residents who have an interest in using radios for communication within their neighborhoods and with the CERT radio networks. CERT will offer advice on what kind of radios are needed and provide training on operation, and how to use in a radio net. A weekly practice session of Nets will be established in each neighborhood.

If you would like more information please send an email message to the Tualatin CERT Radio Team, at tualatincertradionet@gmail.com . The CERT radio team will get back to you with additional details on radio and training dates.