Wilderness Protocol

Staying Connected When It Matters Most

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What is the Wilderness Protocol?

- A guideline for monitoring simplex frequencies (i.e. No Infrastructure Needed)
- Originally created for hikers, backpackers, and remote operators
- Designed for areas without repeater or cell coverage
- Ensures emergency communication capability
- Since been adopted by EMCOMM and ARES group

When and Why to Use It

- Remote hiking/camping
- Disaster response (e.g., hurricanes, earthquakes)
- Search and rescue
- Field operations with poor coverage
- Emergency events with infrastructure damage
- Might not know the tone of a local repeater you aren’t normally in

Use within TCARES

- Use during major non-deployment events (winter weather, storms, heatwaves).
- Members can monitor at all times (if you can)
- Relay to NetControl or appropriate authorities.

The Protocol - Monitoring Schedule

- Primary Frequency: 146.520 MHz (National Simplex)
- Check-in Times: 0700, 1000, 1300, 1600, 1900, 2200 (local time)
- Listen for 5 minutes at the top of each check in time
- Use beacons or short calls to announce listening
  - “KJ5DJC listening for emergency traffic”

Extended Monitoring Options

- Monitor 5 minutes before and after the hour
- Increase of Monitoring Intervals (e.g. every hour)

Supplementary Frequencies

- 70cm: 446.000 MHz
- 6m: 52.525 MHz
- 1.25m: 223.500 MHz
- 23cm: 1294.500 MHz
- Digital support (e.g., APRS, DMR, D-STAR)

Best Practices

- Inform others of protocol use
- Use high ground for better coverage
- Set alarms to remind you to check
- Don’t forget to use callsign per FCC regulations

Q&A?

73

Stay safe, stay prepared.