

Communications:

Communications between team members and the CRC during activation and operations is critical. Upon call-out, all team members need to rapidly get in touch and then remain in touch with the CRC until released by the CRC.

Tabb Lakes team members will utilize the following types of communications:

- Intra-team – to facilitate search and rescue operations
- Inter-team – to coordinate movement and logistics during operations.
- Team Leader to CRC – to coordinate logistics and assistance
- CRC to local authorities (fire department or emergency operations center) and/or to cooperative agencies (Red Cross or similar organizations)

Communications is the most important aspect of CRC operations. Prompt and accurate information will ensure the CRC is able to coordinate activities and provide resources and support to teams and team members in a timely manner.

The primary communication method between teams and between the teams and the CRC will be handheld radios known as FRS (Family Radio Service) radios. These radios are available at low cost in local stores. The CRC will not stock these radios, so members and volunteers are encouraged to obtain and use their own personal radio.

During activation and operations, all Tabb Lakes team members are to turn on their FRS radio to the pre-assigned channel. They should monitor all traffic and relay reports to the CRC, as needed. (FRS radios transmit at about a ½ watt which translates to a range between one and two miles.)

The CRC will initially operate on the following FRS frequencies:

- Primary: 462.5625 MHz (aka Channel 1 on many radios)
- Alternate: 467.5625 MHz (aka Channel 8 on many radios)

The CRC will run a directed net on the above frequencies. This means no station other than the net control station (the CRC) may communicate with any other station without first obtaining permission from the net control station.

Additional frequencies/channels may be utilized based on the number of teams deployed and the size of the organization. The CRC will provide these frequencies/channels as needed. Since FRS radios have "channels" and not frequency displays, communications checks will be conducted with the CRC by all teams leaving the CRC location to ensure proper communications are established prior to being deployed.

Radio communications between the Tabb Lakes CRC and the York County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be handled by volunteer residents

holding a valid amateur radio license. The Tabb Lakes amateur radio operator will relay status reports and request critical emergency services. (The York County EOC has volunteers who support amateur radio communications between the different counties and cities in Hampton Roads, and throughout Virginia.)

- Primary Ham Frequency: 146.670(-) MHz, Tone 173.8
- Alternate Ham Frequency: xxx.xxx MHz

The CRC will monitor the NOAA weather station on the following frequency:

- NOAA Weather Frequency: 162.550 MHz

The following communication methods will be utilized in Tabb Lakes:

- E-mail – for advance warning of impending disaster. May be used to alert and mobilize team members.
- Telephone (Wire) – for advance warning of impending disaster. May be used to alert and mobilize team members. Alternate communication method between teams and between the teams and the CRC following activation.
- Telephone (Cellular) – for advance warning of impending disaster. May be used to alert and mobilize team members. Alternate communication method between teams and between the teams and the CRC following activation.
- Family Radio Service (FRS) Radio – primary communication method between teams and between the teams and the CRC following activation. Be aware that these radios may not reliably be able to cover the entire Tabb Lakes neighborhood due to the houses and other structures interfering with the radio signals – relaying of communications may be necessary.
- Ham VHF/UHF Portable/Mobile Radio – primary communication method between the Tabb Lakes CRC and the York County EOC.
- Hand-Carried Messages – alternate communication method for all of the above.

In order to utilize most of the above methods, team members must ensure telephone and e-mail information maintained at the CRC is current.

Plain English will be used when communicating on the radios. The ‘10 codes’ will not be used as they are unfamiliar to most people, and there are various definitions for some of the codes. Situations should be described clearly and briefly, using the same terminology as for normal communication. In order to reduce the amount of radio traffic, some thought should be given to what needs to be communicated before the radio is used.