



The Springlake Preparedness Group has set up a communication program to be used in the event of a major disaster. The system is in two parts; Amateur (HAM) radio for communication with outside emergency organizations and; FRS walkie-talkie units for local tactical use.



Amateur (HAM) radio

National governments regulate technical and operational characteristics of radio transmissions and issue individual stations licenses with an identifying call sign. Amateur operators are *licensed and tested* for their understanding of key concepts in electronics and government radio regulations. This enables communication across a city, region, country, continent, the entire world, or even into space.

Amateur radio operators are required to obtain a license to operate a HAM radio. The licenses grant hams the privilege to operate in larger segments of the radio frequency spectrum, with a wider variety of communication techniques, and with higher power levels relative to unlicensed personal radio services. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amateur_radio

The Springlake Preparedness Group presently has four (4) licensed HAM radio operators among the membership. Our operators have participated in emergency operation drills with Columbia County Emergency Management, and in the event of a major disaster, may be called upon to supplement emergency communications county-wide and beyond. For that purpose, an emergency communication center has been established in Springlake.

Amateur radio groups and associations have set up a series of radio repeaters throughout the country, which allow individual operators virtually unlimited access to other operators, anywhere, anytime. ***Do not*** confuse Amateur (HAM) radio with Citizens Band radio.



Family Radio Service (FRS)

An individual license is not required to operate an FRS radio, provided you comply with the rules. You may operate an FRS radio regardless of your age and for personal or business use.

The usual range of an FRS device on channels 8-14 is less than one-half mile, but longer range communications can be achieved on channels 1-7 and 15-22 depending on conditions.

FRS radios are widely available at many retail outlets at affordable costs. Members of the Springlake Preparedness Group provide FRS radios for emergency communications at our own expense, plus a small number of Springlake owned radios are available for emergencies. The group has an agreed upon channel for operational use and a series of communication tests have been conducted to assure the agreed upon channel allows individual radio units the range needed for community-wide use.

<https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/family-radio-service-frs>

Emergency Services

In addition to HAM and FRS radio capability, Springlake radio operators have the ability to monitor emergency communications of local police, fire and medical responders. All committee members are registered with *Columbia County Alert Network* for notification of emergency information. Members have access to national government networks via cell phone apps and have access to Springlake's *One Call Now* network.



The term "ham" was first a pejorative term used in professional wired telegraphy during the 19th century, to mock operators with poor Morse code sending skills ("ham-fisted"). This term continued to be used after the invention of radio and the proliferation of amateur experimentation with wireless telegraphy; among land- and sea-based professional radio operators, "ham" amateurs were considered a nuisance. The use of "ham" meaning "amateurish or unskilled" survives today in other disciplines ("ham actor").

The amateur radio community subsequently began to reclaim the word as a label of pride, and by the mid-20th century it had lost its pejorative meaning. Although not an acronym, it is often mistakenly written as "HAM" in capital letters.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amateur_radio