

# Emergency 2-Way Radios

Having an emergency 2-way radio at your home is essential to being prepared for an emergency or evacuation!

The ability to communicate effectively and accurately within the neighborhood, and to get help from outside of the neighborhood, is vital in an emergency. Personal 2-way radios, also called FRS/GMRS radios or simply “walkie-talkies”, can be life-saving tools. Every family should have at least one 2-way radio (two is best), and know how and when to use them.

2-way radios have several advantages over phones. For example, in the event of an emergency, cell phone and/or land-line phone service may be physically disrupted or overloaded and unavailable. 2-way radios however are completely independent of any fixed infrastructure, and they can function when cell phones may not be working.

In addition, cell and land-line phones are point-to-point, so you can only talk with one person at a time. 2-way radios however allow you to talk to, or listen to, many people at once. This feature can be very helpful in an emergency; for example, being able to listen to the Neighborhood Command Center provide disaster response instructions.

Examples of emergency 2-way radios include:



ICOM IC-4088A  
FRS



Motorola FRS



Motorola FRS/GMRS



Midland FRS/GMRS

## **Purchasing**

The MSIC recommends that every household purchase a pair of 2-way radios as well as extra batteries. These can be purchased locally at stores such as REI and Big 5 Sporting Goods, and on-line at Amazon.com and similar sites.

It is recommended to purchase and have on-hand several sets of extra batteries for your radio. Many radios can also use rechargeable batteries, but in the event of a disaster you may not have the ability to recharge these.

## **Operation**

It is important to learn how to properly operate your emergency 2-way radio. Instruction on the use of 2-way radios can be provided by the MSIC, and you can refer to this document on the MSIC Web site for information on using your 2-way radio:

<http://www.montclairsic.org/pdf/MSICRadioCommunicationsRecommendations.pdf>