

**Procedures for the Use of DDAGW's
Multi-Agency Radio Communication
System (MARCS)**

Division: DDAGW
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I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to describe the procedures that will be used by Ohio EPA's Division of Drinking and Ground Waters (DDAGW) when using the Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS). The following will be explained: who is authorized to use the equipment and how, on what occasions, and where it is to be secured when not in use.

II. BACKGROUND:

DDAGW and the Division of Emergency and Remedial Response (DERR) purchased the radio system using a federal anti-terrorism grant to increase its communication ability between the two divisions and other critical government agencies around the state during emergencies and natural disasters. The Ohio Highway Patrol, Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA), county EMAs, all 88 county sheriff's departments and the Ohio Department of Health currently use MARCS. DDAGW owns eleven (11) radios. Additional state agencies may be added to DDAGW's talk-groups as they come on-line in the future.

III. PROCEDURE:

Radios will be used by DDAGW personnel during emergency situations and also when conducting day-to-day business operations for familiarity purposes. Radios will be used on a weekly basis to familiarize staff with their operation and to reveal any operational difficulties so that they may be remedied. Each week, district managers will direct staff members to contact Central Office's drinking water staff and communicate using the radios when in the field. These personnel can be either Emergency Response Team (ERT) members or general staff members. District managers are responsible for training all district personnel on the use of the radios. When doing so, reference the handouts from the MARCS training event and the handbook entitled, "Using your MARCS Digital Radios" for specific operating procedures and instructions.

1. The following guidelines will be observed for storage and access of radios:
 - When not in use, (after normal business hours) radios and batteries will be locked in a secure place within the office. Battery chargers are not required to be locked up.

- District Offices and Central Office are accountable for all issued MARCS equipment.
 - All Emergency Response Team (ERT) members will have priority access to the radios; however, all DDAGW personnel may use the radio system when appropriate.
 - All users must sign out equipment using a sign-out sheet indicating the user's name, radio identification numbers and the time & date. Each district office manager has a hardcopy and e-copy of a template for this sign-out sheet.
 - Staff may take a radio home overnight if they are actively involved in a water system emergency or anticipate being involved in such circumstances within the next 12 hours.
2. The following guidelines will be observed for maintenance and inventory of radios:
- Radios, batteries and chargers will be physically inventoried and inspected on a monthly basis for:
 1. Physical damage
 2. Performance issues.
 Results will be annotated on the Monthly Inventory Sheet assigned to each division office.
 - Report damage and performance issues immediately upon discovery to the Drinking Water Program Manager in Central Office
 - Send a copy of your MARCS Inspection Sheet to Central Office annually.
3. The following will be observed when communicating via the radios:
- State the district office and program you represent when calling someone. Example: "central office drinking water calling southwest drinking water"
 - Feel free to use names when conversing for convenience.
 - The state of Ohio MARCS office has no mandatory usage protocol except to remain professional at all times when using the radios.

IV. History

The Division of Drinking and Ground Waters first issued this document on April 13, 2007.