

For Immediate Release

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Demonstration of Emergency Communication Open to the Public June 25-26

Portsmouth, RI June 15, 2016 -- The news has been full of reports of natural disasters such as the ongoing Texas floods, while the Pacific Northwest just completed their "Cascadia Rising 2016" exercise as they prepare for an inevitable seismic event and tsunami. Meanwhile RI area hams have been quietly conducting disaster shelter communication exercises and supporting major public service events such as the Tour de Cure bicycle race. Our responses to real-life events help our nation recover from disasters that plunge our modern world into darkness when the internet, email, cell phones, and other modern technology fails. Our continuous training ensures that we can provide backup communication for everything from the American Red Cross to FEMA. Newport County Radio Club "hams" will join tens of thousands of other Amateur Radio operators testing their emergency capabilities during a nationwide event called "Field Day"

On the weekend of June 25-26, the public will have a chance to meet and talk with Rhode Island hams and see for themselves what the Amateur Radio Service is all about. Using only emergency power sources, Newport County Radio Club members will deploy several emergency stations in Portsmouth's Glen Park (across from the Pavilion), located down Gilbert Barker RD, off of Glen Road. Operations will begin at 2 PM on Saturday and continue for 24 hours non-stop. There will be a station dedicated to demonstrating Amateur Radio communications to the public and anyone interested can make radio contacts of their own (no license required).

Our Radio Operators will prove they can send messages in many forms without the use of telephone systems, internet, or any infrastructure that can be compromised in a crisis. More than 35,000 amateur radio operators across the country exchanged 1.3 million messages during last year's Field Day event at thousands of temporary field deployed locations.

As Craig Fugate of the US Department of Homeland Security stated, "When everything else fails, Amateur Radio is often times our last line of defense. When you need Amateur Radio, you really need them."

The public is invited to observe and participate beginning 2 PM Saturday June 25 at Portsmouth's Glen Park, located down Gilbert Barker RD, off of Glen Road.