

## TIMELY TIPS ABOUT RADIOS

*Dick Woolf – Telecom Advisor*

Here, in no particular order, are some “best practices” you might find useful in improving your patrol’s radio communications:

- A radio antenna is NOT a handle. Pulling on the antenna may cause it to break internally.
- Radios work best when their antennas are vertical.
- DO NOT SHOUT into your radio. It does not increase the range – it only distorts your voice.
- After pressing the transmit button, wait a moment before starting to speak. Otherwise, your first words may not be heard.
- If you think you’re in a “dead spot,” try moving a few feet in any direction to see if your signal improves. Also, facing the location you’re trying to talk to may help.
- A radio needs a full charge to work properly. Charging time depends on your charger, but overnight is a good starting point.
- Turn radio OFF while charging.
- If the radio is only going to be used on weekends, don’t keep it on charge from Monday to Friday. That’s too much.
- New batteries need to be fully charged before being placed into service.
- Don’t take a radio out of the charger, use it for 5 minutes, then put it back into the charger. You will reduce the life of the battery.
- If you are operating multi-shift, your battery will not last from 8 AM until 11 PM. You need multiple batteries.
- Don’t leave the radio on your belt, press the transmit button, and talk loudly, hoping the radio will pick up your voice. The radio should be an inch or so from your mouth.
- If you don’t want to lift the radio off your belt, use a speaker-mike.
- Keep the radio under your parka to keep the battery warm, and snow or rain off the radio.
- If the radio gets wet, turn it off, remove the battery, and let it dry out. Don’t put it in the microwave!