



Contact:

**SAN DIEGO AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNITY
RALLIES AGAINST OPPRESSIVE PROPOSED CITY ORDINANCE**

Members of the San Diego Amateur Radio community, nearly 4,000 strong in the City of San Diego and 9,000 countywide, have organized to oppose a proposed city ordinance that would add an unnecessary bureaucratic burden that could cost radio operators in excess of \$10,000 in fees and costs and a year in a complicated processing scenario.

“Amateur radio operators – commonly known as ham radio operators – are a significant free resource during emergencies such as the Witch Creek and Cedar fires,” said _____, a member of the San Diego DX Club, which is heading up opposition to the measure. “These operators maintain critical communication infrastructure for emergency responders. Such services save the city more than \$2.5 million in labor annually and an additional \$6 million in equipment. Most important, it helps keep the community safer and saves lives.”

Staff members at the city of San Diego have prepared a proposed amateur radio antenna support structure ordinance that is overly restrictive, unscientific and tremendously damaging to the community’s ability to communicate when government resources are insufficient.

_____ says the San Diego DX Club offered significant scientific background on the disastrous effects this ordinance could produce. The Club supports a new, reasonable, physics-based ordinance that would preserve the ham community and its emergency capabilities. The technical information, developed by experts in radio engineering and technology, was summarily disregarded by the city.

The city's proposed ordinance requires a complex and costly permitting process, the main effect of which would be to limit the height of the vast majority of ham radio antenna support structures to approximately 30 feet (roof height) unless applicants go through a lengthy permitting process. The permitting process will cost thousands of dollars without any assurance of approval.

"It seems the City's intent is to illegitimately raise the bar on amateur radio antenna installation by unnecessarily increasing burdens relating to placement, height and cost, contrary to the policies of both the Federal Communications Commission and the State of California," said Felix Tinkov, a land use attorney who has taken up the Club's cause. "The City's proposal has absolutely no scientific foundation and appears to be based solely on aesthetics – that is, occasional objections to antennas in residential neighborhoods."

Tinkov says the proposed ordinance violates both state and federal statutes that protect amateur radio operators because of their critical contribution to emergency communication and their ongoing development as a talent pool for the nation.

The Club says that the City's ordinance creates such a significant burden that amateur radio enthusiasts would be discouraged from pursuing support structures high enough to ensure reliable communication during natural disasters. Simply put, the proposed 30-foot limit will smother reliable communication given San Diego's terrain. Simply put, spending an uncapped amount, well into the thousands of dollars, to request a permit, with no guarantee of approval, is an especially unreasonable burden for a volunteer.

Amateur Radio in the Community

The ham radio community has provided significant, free resource during city-wide emergencies, like the Witch Creek and Cedar fires, when hams maintained critical communication infrastructure for emergency responders. The existence of such services saves the city more than \$2.5 million in labor annually and \$6 million more in equipment, and can become invaluable when critical “life and death” communications fail on the city’s primary systems, as has happened in the past.

Amateur radio operators provide free primary and backup communications support for critical services (e.g., hospital, fire, military, maritime, public safety and disaster preparedness and relief), working directly with the Red Cross and other emergency service providers.

“Our community is ready and willing to apply its expertise and scientific background to serve the interest of the entire region, “ _____ concludes. “We can help craft an ordinance that makes economic sense, meets Federal and State requirements and protects the public benefits that result from amateur radio activities.”