



## WHAT'S WRONG WITH SAN DIEGO'S PROPOSED AMATEUR RADIO ORDINANCE?

The city of San Diego has prepared a proposed ordinance concerning amateur radio antennas that is overly restrictive, unscientific and tremendously damaging to the community's ability to communicate during disasters and to the city's nearly 4,000 federally licensed amateur radio operators ("hams"). What's wrong with this ordinance?

- The City's ordinance would require a Neighborhood Development Permit (Process 2) for amateur radio antenna structures over 30 feet in height. Because of San Diego's terrain, structures limited to 30 feet or less would be very unreliable for use in emergency situations. The City of San Diego has been given data which demonstrates that the antenna support structures must reach approximately 82 feet to reasonably accommodate ground conditions for long range, reliable and efficient communication.
- Federal and state legislation prescribe *reasonable accommodation, facilitation and encouragement* and the establishment of the *minimum practicable regulation* of amateur radio by local governments. This proposed ordinance violates those standards.
- In much of San Diego, any antenna exceeding a 30-foot limit would require the citizen-volunteer ham to undergo an onerous, expensive and time-consuming permit process. This process could take a year and cost well in excess of \$10,000 in fees and costs without any guarantee that a permit would ever be issued.
- A major concern is that the new ordinance is a discretionary and unpredictable process. That is, each application must be considered individually based on land characteristics, neighbors' suggestions and complaints, and subjective aesthetic standards. A single opposing individual could unfairly and unjustly add time, money and complexity to a process that doesn't require it. This, in spite of the fact that Federal regulation indicates that the licensed operator is the most qualified party to determine what antenna and height he needs for best results.
- It is the position of the SDDXC that any permitting process should be ministerial in nature. In other words, specific guidelines would be set to permit the installation of amateur radio antenna support structures. Meeting those guidelines should mean permit approval.
- The ham community wants to work with the city to craft an ordinance that makes economic sense, meets federal and state requirements and protects the public benefits that result from amateur radio activities. So far, all efforts to work with the City have been rebuffed.