

# FEMA Channels

# Interoperability



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced that two 60-meter channels have been made available, as necessary, for interoperability between US Government stations and US amateur radio stations involved in emergency communications related to the wildland firefighting response in California, Oregon, and Washington, and to Hurricane Sally. These interoperability channels will remain active until the need for these channels no longer exists: Channel 1 – primary voice traffic 5332 kHz channel center, 5330.5 kHz USB voice Channel 2 – digital traffic 5348 kHz channel center, 5346.5 kHz USB with 1.5-kHz offset to center of digital waveform. Frequencies may be modified or added to by FEMA Region 10 for their area or operations due to existing 5-MHz/60-meter interoperability plans for their region. Amateur radio is secondary on the 5-MHz band and should yield to operational traffic related to wildland firefighting and hurricane response. Although the intended use for these channels is interoperability between federal government stations and licensed US amateur radio stations, federal government stations are primary users and amateurs are secondary users. The Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) is following FEMA's lead on the interoperability channel designations for the wildfire and hurricane response. Army MARS Program Manager Paul English, WD8DBY, says he has alerted all MARS members of the FEMA channel designations and MARS members are prepared to

support response efforts as needed.

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