

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**SECTION: Alarms and Response Guidelines  
SUBJECT: RADIO OPERATIONS  
REVISED: 10/2021**

**POLICY:**

This standard operating guideline shall apply to all personnel utilizing the radio systems. All firefighters are expected to know how operate the radio systems in conjunction with emergency operations and comply with these guidelines.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this SOG is to establish a uniform and effective practice for radio operations in conjunction with all the other agencies operating on the County's radio system and comply with the established policies of Jefferson County.

**REFERENCE:**

Jefferson County TLMR Radio System Concept of Operations

**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES:**

Operations on the Jefferson County Trunked Land Mobile Radio System can be confusing. This Best Practice will provide guidance to use the system effectively.

Switch positions are for handheld (portable) radios. Mobile radios use the arrow up or arrow down keys to switch between channels

1. Dispatch operations occur on the dispatch (JE-FIRE DISP) talk group. Units calling enroute will do so on the dispatch talk group (switch position 1).
2. On-scene operations will occur on an assigned talk group:
  - a. Single department operations will be assigned to the Town of Watertown Fire Operations (JE-T/WARTN FIR) talk group (switch position 2).
  - b. Multi-agency operations will be assigned a county-wide TAC talk group (JE-FIRE TAC-1 through TAC-5) (switch positions 7-11). These talk groups will be assigned by dispatch, usually at the time of dispatch.

c. Interior operations will occur on a Direct (JE-FIRE DIR1 through DIR3) channel (switch positions 4-6). *The DIRECT channels have limited range but are essential for interior operations, as handhelds may not function on the system in that environment.*

d. Operations involving EMS will use "JE-EMS TAC1" (switch position 3) talk group.

3. While enroute, mobile radios should remain on the Dispatch talk group. Use handheld (portable) radios for other talk groups, i.e., requesting incoming orders. The firefighter in the officer's seat should perform this function.

4. Upon arrival on-scene, all handheld (portable) radios will switch to the designated TAC talk group or DIRECT channel. Mobile radios should also be switched to designated talk groups if they will be used for incident communications.

5. At least one radio MUST remain on the Dispatch talk group or have that talk group loaded in a scan list. An individual (such as a mutual aid officer or coordinator) should be assigned the task of monitoring the dispatch talk group, if available.

6. Only officers and apparatus will contact Dispatch directly. All others will operate on the assigned TAC talk group or DIRECT channel.

7. If a secondary TAC talk group is needed (i.e., water supply operations), the Incident Commander will request one from Dispatch.

8. Communications with Law Enforcement may be possible on JE-CNTY WIDE1 (Switch Position 16).

9. Non-emergency local events will be assigned to the Town of Watertown Operations talk group.

10. Major events will have talk groups assigned in the event communications plan.

11. Firefighters are responsible for the radios in their possession, including ensuring the radios are operational and are replaced in their designated location following any operation or event.

## **Portable Radio Switch Position Function**

- 1 JE-FIRE DISP (Jefferson Dispatch)**
- 2 JE-T/WTRTN FIR (Town of Watertown Operations)**
- 3 JE-EMS TAC1 (EMS TAC 1)**
- 4 JE-FIRE DIR1 (DIRECT 1)**
- 5 JE-FIRE DIR2 (DIRECT 2)**
- 6 JE-FIRE DIR3 (DIRECT 3)**
- 7 JE-FIRE TAC1 (FIRE TAC 1)**
- 8 JE-FIRE TAC2 (FIRE TAC 2)**
- 9 JE-FIRE TAC3 (FIRE TAC 3)**
- 10 JE-FIRE TAC4 (FIRE TAC 4)**
- 11 JE-FIRE TAC5 (FIRE TAC 5)**
- 12 JE-FIRE TAC6 (FIRE TAC 6)**
- 13 JE-FIRE TAC7 (FIRE TAC 7)**
- 14 RE-FIRE WIDE (Regional FIRE WIDE)**
- 15 JE-CNTY WIDE2 (Jefferson WIDE 2)**
- 16 JE-CNTY WIDE1 (Jefferson WIDE 1)**