COMMUNICATIONS

8.01 <u>RADIO EQUIPMENT</u>:

The Town of Menasha Fire Department uses radio equipment operating on a VHF High-band primary frequency of 158.775 MHz. These radios are operated under the licensure of the Federal Communications Commission.

The Department's radio system consists of two-way communication units, and tone alert "pager" receivers. Specifically, the radio equipment includes:

1. Base stations: 40 watt, scanning two-way radios;

2. Mobile units: 40 watt, 16-Channel Programmable Scanning, two-way radio installed in each Department vehicle; or 132-Channel units (Orion)

3. Hand-held portables: 5-watt walkie-talkies.

4. Tone-alert Receivers (Pagers):

    Assigned to each Department member. These monitors are activated by tones produced by an encoder connected to the 911 center. After being alerted by the tone, a message is given advising Department members about the location and nature of the emergency. NOTE--Each individual should take cautious care of their assigned pager. **Protective cases are provided and should be used at ALL times. Pagers are to be left in your private vehicles during emergencies or training sessions to avoid unnecessary damage!**

    <u>Individual station tones</u> are available and when activated, only personnel from the alerted station should respond. <u>The Fire Chiefs are assigned individual tones</u>, which can be activated to provide important messages to the Chiefs. **Example-** During a Working Fire, if the Fire Chief has not responded, his pager should be alerted to notify him of a working fire!

    <u>Department members are responsible for the operating condition of the pager</u> once it is issued to them. Any physical damage to a pager should be reported to their Company Officer immediately, in some cases a written explanation of how damages incurred will be requested.

8.02 <u>RADIO CONTROLS</u>:

Before operating any equipment, the operator should become familiar with the mechanical operation of the particular radio unit, and the operating guidelines outlined below and on the following pages.

COMMUNICATIONS

<u>Listening to the radio</u>:

1. Adjust the volume to a comfortable listening level.

2. Check the unit for scan mode (normally should be in the scan mode)

3. No squelch adjustment is necessary - radios have automatic squelch.

<u>Transmitting</u>:

1. Do not become excited.

2. Avoid unnecessary transmissions.

3. Any unit working at a fire or rescue has priority over any other transmission.

4. Do not transmit until determining if the "Air is Clear".

5. Do not key the microphone prior to knowing what you are going to say.
   (Dead air space often filled with uh..uh..uh.)

6. Do not broadcast messages whose meanings are either vague, of little
   importance, repetitive or rambling.

7. Do not ask numerous questions, the answers to which serve mostly to delay
   operations. This ties up the radio channel so that others are unable to get in
   any message.

8. Hold the microphone 1" to 2" from your mouth. Do not shout! Pitch the voice
   high rather than low.

9. Follow Department radio procedures fro receiving and sending messages.

10. <u>TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE:</u>

   A. Turn the OFF-VOLUME control to the right.

   B. Select proper channel by pressing the CHANNEL up (+) or down (-) switch.
      CHANNEL switches sequence channels 1-16 in ascending or descending
      order for each mode.

COMMUNICATIONS

    C. Press the MONITOR switch to disable Squelch circuit and Channel Guard decoder. Adjust VOLUME control for comfortable listening level and then release MONITOR switch for normal operation.

    D. If channel scanning is desired, press SCAN switch to turn on. SCAN indicator light will turn on.

11. <u>TO SEND A MESSAGE:</u>

    A. Turn radio on as described in "To receive a Message" section.

    B. Select the proper channel.

    C. Observe BUSY light or press MONITOR switch to determine that channel is not in use. (Come off hook, disables CG and SCAN, if on).

    D. Press the Press-to-Talk (PTT) switch on the microphone. **HOLD the button 2-3 seconds** and then identify yourself. Example: "Engine 40 to COMM Center". (The red TX (transmit) light will glow each time you press the PTT switch).

    E. Release the PTT switch and wait for an answer to your call. Example: "Go ahead, Engine 40". Then complete your message.

8.03 <u>General Guidelines</u>:

1. No messages other than emergency or routine test shall be transmitted over the paging system unless authorized by a Chief Officer.

2. All fire alarms shall be transmitted two times, with approximately thirty seconds (30) between transmissions.

Note: All severe weather alerts will be transmitted once.

3. All members <u>shall use clear text in lieu of a ten code</u>. The Department will use designated words to avoid misunderstandings.

4. Seek additional operating instructions for different radios. As technology changes rapidly, so does the operation of radios. Be familiar with how different radios may operate differently. EXAMPLE- The "dual head" Orion radios but have their microphone keyed before you can gain control at a different control head.

COMMUNICATIONS

5. <u>Radio Frequency During Emergencies:</u> Always respond and communicate on the primary Dispatch Channel (Red). The Incident Commander will order units to switch to an Operational Channel (Green or Orange) ONCE all TMFD units arrive on location. The Incident Commander shall request the Communication Center to "Notify all Units to Switch to the requested Fire Ground Frequency (Green or Orange)".

6. Scan Mode - Generally leave the unit on the SCAN mode!

7. Cross-reference the **Winnebago County Communications Center USER'S GUIDE** for specific rules and regulations for communication procedures. There is a copy located at each fire station and every member will be held accountable for following the procedures outlined in the User's Guide.

8.04 <u>Radio Identifiers:</u>

ADAM must be used when utilizing <u>personnel</u> identifiers. For example, when Firefighter Smith (725) wants to call the Communication Center, he/she says, "Adam 725 to the Comm Center." Wait for that unit to respond BEFORE giving your message.

8.05 <u>Response to Alarms:</u>

The Fire Department shall be notified by radio pager of the location and type of an emergency. The page shall be given a minimum of two times.

Example: Attention Town of Menasha Fire Department respond to a reported structure fire located at one, zero, zero, zero Valley Road. Respond to one thousand Valley Road for a fire in the building.

8.06 <u>Alarm Acknowledgment:</u>

A Fire Officer from each station area should acknowledge receipt of the call. If a Fire Officer is not available then a Firefighter with a personally assigned radio may acknowledge receipt of the call so the Communication Center is aware that the call was received by the Fire Department.

8.061 <u>Apparatus Acknowledgment:</u>

The responding companies to the scene of an emergency shall acknowledge the alarm with the following information (in addition to pushing enroute button on MDC):

1. Your unit is responding.

2. What the ID Number (A725) is of the person sitting in the officer's seat.

3. The address you are responding if multiple incidents or radio traffic.

COMMUNICATIONS

8.07 <u>Apparatus Arrival</u>:

Upon the arrival of the company (ies) at the scene of the emergency (pushing onscene button on MDC), they shall inform the communications center of the following information:

1. You are on location, and (what address you are at if multiple incidents);

2. Size-up of the situation:
   - A. Occupancy type
   - B. Number of stories
   - C. What visible conditions are present.

3. What your company will be doing, i.e. advancing line to first floor.

4. Who is command (if you are first company on scene)? You may pass command to the next incoming unit once they arrive on scene.

8.08 <u>Emergencies</u>:

All individuals or companies requiring emergency assistance have priority over all others. The following procedures shall be used for emergency traffic:

1. Unit calling the communications center;

2. The statement "Emergency Traffic" transmitted;

3. This will be followed by an alert tone, and the dispatcher shall announce that the unit requesting emergency traffic will have priority.

4. State what your requirement or problem is.

5. No other transmissions shall be made until the dispatcher states to resume normal radio traffic.

6. Refer to RIT communications referenced 4.34 – 4.40 for other emergency radio communications.

8.09 <u>Returning from Alarms</u>:

Companies that have finished their assignment or have been instructed to return to quarters shall inform the communications center in the following manner:

1. MDC Users: Push the "Chg Status" button, then select available on radio, then select send.
2. If no MDC or MDC is not functioning: state what company you are;
3. You are available and where you are returning (from address if multiple incidents);

COMMUNICATIONS

8.10 <u>Companies in Quarters</u>:

1. MDC Users: Push the "Chg Status" button, then select available in quarters, then select send.
2. The first unit or primary unit assigned to the call may have to "clear" the call. This is accomplished by selecting clear on the dispatch screen. It will then prompt you to select a disposition. The disposition normally used will be "clear with report".
3. Then the call can be deleted by selecting delete and following the screen prompting messages.
4. No MDC or MDC not functioning: Companies when they have arrived at their station shall inform the communication center what company you are;
5. You are available in quarters.

8.11 <u>Company Activity Other Than Emergencies</u>:
When a company is out of quarters and available to respond, the company shall inform the communications center they are available on the air. They should also inform them what their task will be, i.e. training, investigation, special assignment, etc.

During the course of the year, a piece of apparatus will have to be taken out of service for routine maintenance or repair. The communications center shall be informed of this condition. If companies are transferred to different stations, the communications center shall also be notified.

8.12 <u>Communications Center:</u>
As mentioned earlier, the communications center shall briefly repeat messages to ensure that everyone can hear the message and to ensure the message given is correct.

The communications center will have a listing of all of the Department's apparatus. This list will indicate to which station all of the apparatus is assigned. For example the list will show that E40 is an Engine Company and that Engine Company 40 is assigned to Station 40's area.

The communications center shall list what companies are not available for service due to mechanical repairs in their CAD system.

COMMUNICATIONS

8.13 <u>Frequencies</u>:
The following are the frequencies and the order in which they appear on the specified radio. Note-these Channel numbers may vary slightly depending on the type of radio. Example- The Orion's have two Groupings (One TMFD; One MUT. AID.)

A. <u>Mobile & Base Radios</u>:

<u>Channel</u>	<u>Agency</u>
1	Red (Dispatch - Winnebago County Fire) Repeater - 158.775
2	Green (Town of Menasha Fireground) - 154.445
3	Yellow - (Fire Com/State-Wide Mutual Aid) - 154.295
4	Orange (Neenah/Menasha Fireground) - 154.325
5	White (Command) Repeater - 151.280
6	Purple (State Mutual Aid) - 151.280
7	Blue (Oshkosh Fire) - 154.190
8	North End PD - 155.610
9	Town Government - 155.145
10	Appleton Fire Dispatch - 154.430 (Violet)
11	Appleton -Operations - 154.175 (Lime)
12	Outagamie Fire Dispatch - 154.250 (Brown)
13	Outagamie Fire Operations - 154.385 (Gold)
14	Outagamie Fire Operations - 153.830 (Silver)
15	Calumet Fire - 154.220
16	Hospital - 155.340
17	Weather - 162.550
18	Winnebago County Sheriff - 158.730
19	State Patrol

B. <u>Portables</u>: (Gp-300, Gp-350, P1225, PR400)

<u>Channel</u>	<u>Agency</u>
1	Red (Dispatch - Winnebago County Fire) Repeater – 158.775
2	Green (Town of Menasha Fireground) – 154.445
3	Yellow (Fire Com/State-Wide Mutual Aid) – 154.295
4	Orange (Neenah/Menasha Fireground) – 154.325
5	White (Command) Repeater – 151.280
6	Purple (State Mutual Aid) – 151.280
7	Blue (Oshkosh Fire) – 154.190
8	North End PD – 155.610
9	Town Government – 155.145
10	Appleton Fire Dispatch – 154.430 (Violet)
11	Appleton Fire Operations – 154.175 (Lime)
12	Outagamie Fire Dispatch – 154.250 (Brown)
13	Outagamie Fire Operations – 154.385 (Gold)
14	Outagamie Fire Operations – 153.830 (Silver)

COMMUNICATIONS

8.14 <u>Working Fires</u>:
> Whenever the Department arrives on scene to a situation such as a structure fire, hazardous materials incident, disaster, all companies after arriving on location shall report that they are switching to a fireground frequency (color). All operations shall be carried out using this frequency.

8.15 <u>Mutual Aid</u>:
> Whenever this Department is requested for mutual aid, initial contact can be made on the frequency for the requesting department. We should minimize our radio traffic to the Mutual Aid department as their procedures may be different with minimal radio 'noise'.

8.16 <u>Mobile Radio Frequencies</u>:
> All mobile radios should scan at all times. This allows for the monitoring of other agencies responding to the same incident along with the ability to receive messages. The exception is there a specific channel assigned when operating at a fire or other emergency. The green frequency shall always be the second priority channel.

8.17 <u>Civilian, Fire fighter Death or Injury</u>:
> Civilian or Fire fighter injuries shall be reported to command; however, names will never be used or broadcasted over the radio.

8.18 <u>Notification of Coroner</u>:
> See Winnebago County User's Guide.   Cellular phones located in various apparatus can be utilized to contact the communications center.

8.19 <u>GLOSSARY</u>:
> Affirmative - Yes.
>
> Available - The company or unit is ready to respond to fires or other emergencies.
>
> Available, On the Radio - Indicates that the unit or company is available to respond and can be reached IMMEDIATELY by radio.
>
> Emergency Traffic - A term that indicates an emergency is in progress and that the unit/company calling has radio priority over all other radio traffic.
>
> Enroute - normally used by administrative or staff personnel to designate destinations. Enroute is NOT a substitution for responding. Example, E41 is enroute to Appleton Fire Department, Station I.
>
> In-Quarters - Indicates that the unit or company is in their assigned station.
>
> In-Service - A company or unit is available to respond to fires or other

emergencies.

Message Received - A term that indicates that the person receiving the message hears, understands, and will perform the instructions given.

COMMUNICATIONS

Negative - No.

On Location - Indicates that the unit or company has arrived at their destination.

Out of Service - Indicates the unit or company is mechanically unable to respond
     to emergency calls.

Respond, Responding - Used during the dispatch procedure to indicate the
     company is going to the specified address of the
     emergency.

Shall - Indicates that this is a mandatory requirement.

Unreadable - Used when the signal is not clear. Ask for a repeat of the message.

8.20 <u>County Identifiers:</u>

<u>See Winnebago County User's Guide for more Communication Procedures</u>

8.21 <u>Mobile Data Computers (MDC):</u>
<u>Scope:</u> In 2004, the Town of Menasha Fire Department installed Mobile Data
Computers for use as a communication tool with Winnebago County
Communication Center. This was an upgrade from the older Mobile Data
Terminals.

A user's guide is located at each fire station. Read the guide and be familiar with
the operation of the MDC's. **ALL personnel should be able to use the MDC's
effectively.**

<u>Operations:</u>
The units are 'hot wired' and should be logged on at all times.

During emergencies, verbal radio transmission should be used in addition to the
MDC transmission, in the following cases only:

1) Identify your unit is <u>responding</u> verbally on the radio in addition to pushing the
   "Enroute" button. Push the enroute button FIRST BEFORE verbalizing.

2) The first-in unit should give a verbal size-up, initial orders, establish or pass
   command and move units to a fireground channel in addition to pushing the
   "On Scene" button FIRST.

3) All other functions such as "available on scene" should be done via the MDC
   ONLY. It is not necessary to verbally transmit these status changes when you
   have a MDC.

COMMUNICATIONS

4) The last unit leaving the scene should verbally close out the scene and terminate command.

Remember- The units that have MDCs MUST be plugged in to an electrical source while parked in the fire station. All messages should be cleared from the screen after each call!