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Week 38 of 52: Emergency Communication

Posted By [Tess Pennington](#)

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Consider, for a moment, how drastically your life would change without the continuous flow of energy the grid delivers. With the increase of natural and man-made disasters paired with an aging infrastructure, experts from the private and public sector warn that we are just [one major catastrophic event](#) ^[1] away from an incident that could take down the grid....causing a complete meltdown of life in America as we know it today.

According to James Rawles, author of [How to Survive the End of the World As We Know It](#) ^[2], most radio and TV stations have enough fuel to run their backup generators for *only a few days*. Ditto for the telephone company central offices (COs). If that is the case, then what will happen when those generators run out of power? As he points out, "there will be an acute information vacuum."

The best way to to prepare for this serious situation is to equip yourself with the knowledge and with the tools for communication. Communication in a grid down scenario is going to be *vital* in order to listen to events unfolding around you, talk with loved ones, and protect and keep order in your community or surrounding area. Because many of us are not familiar with the vast array of emergency communication devices, the following list is recommended in [How to Survive the End of the World As We Know It](#) ^[2], (p.193-198) as well as a brief description of how they operate:

Shortwave Receiver

Shortwave radio is a type of long-range radio transmission that bounces signals off a layer of the atmosphere (the ionosphere) to be received in another part of the world. Unlike AM and FM radio, shortwave radio frequencies can bounce off of the ionosphere and be heard many thousands of miles away.

Rawles suggests that your receiver be a compact, portable general coverage AM/FM/weather band/CB/shortwave receiver.

Popular brands are Grundig, Sangean, Eton, Kaito, Sony

Transceivers

A transceiver or transmitter/receiver is a device that combines transmission and reception capability on shared circuitry. In regions where digital coverage is spotty, a transceiver may be equipped for analog to ensure that there will be no loss of signal. Transceivers can handle analog or digital signals, and in some cases, both.

Ham radio transceivers, for example can broadcast and receive transmissions for over 50 miles, and some can let you talk with people from the other side of the planet. Conversations on a ham radio are not secure or private, so ensure that you do not broadcast any personal information over the airwaves.

The top brands include MURS (Multi Use Radio Service), Yaesu VX-3R VHF/UHF, Handheld VHF 2 Meter Amateur Radio Transceiver 5watt, TYT TH-F5

CB Radio

CB radio or Citizens' band (CB) radio is a communication device that allows people to talk to each other using a radio frequency. The CB radio user has 40 channels to choose from and

uses an 11 meter band or 27 MHz. CB radio was originally intended for use by government divisions such as the military, and in the 1960s, it was mainly used by taxi firms and tradesmen.

Top brands include an Cobra 148GTL, Midland 1001Z, Cobra 75 WX ST

Field Telephones

Field telephones are mobile telephones designed for military use, and have the capability to withstand wartime conditions. They can draw power from their own battery, from a telephone exchange (via a central battery known as CB), or from an external power source. There are some that are sound-powered telephones, and do not require a battery. James Wesley Rawles believes that having reliable field telephones is essential to coordinate retreat security in a post-TEOTWAWKI world.

For semi-permanent installation, ensure that you buy cable that is rated for underground burial (UB), to conceal and protect all of your lines. Burying your lines will also prevent both intentional and unintentional lines cuts and breaks. He goes on to further suggest buying extra field phones, so that you can run communication wire to your neighbors and coordinate with them as well. To purchase field telephones, look on eBay, at Army surplus stores, or emergency supply stores.

Top brands are TA-1042 DNVT, TA 838, TA-312

Table Radio

Essentially table radios are contained radio receivers and can mostly be found on eBay. Many can run on battery power, thus making them useful as emergency radios. Because some table radios still use the vacuum-tube technology, they are virtually EMP proof. Rawles suggests finding a radio with shortwave bands, such as a Zenith TransOceanic H500 and to purchase a redundant comm gear (headsets, antennas, etc).

Top suggested brands include: Zenith TransOceanic H500, Drake R8B

To learn more about how having emergency communication devices is vital in a post-emergency situation at Ready Nutrition, [click here](#) ^[3].

During emergencies, our total dependence on communications becomes all too clear. If the emergency is severe enough, the communication could be limited, if not non-existent for an extended amount of time. We have all read enough survival books to know that the "comm down" scenario is a very real threat, and happens more often than not. So, when we are on our own, will you have your own communication devices set up to communicate with others or will you take a gamble and stay in the dark?

Preps to Buy:

- Short wave radio that is compact, portable, general coverage AM/FM/weather band/CB/shortwave receiver
- Transceivers such as a Ham Radio and MURS walkie talkies
- CB radio with SSB capability
- Field telephones with extra communication wire
- Table radio with shortwave bands
- Extra communication gear (i.e., headsets, antennas, etc.)
- Extra batteries

Action Items:

1. Read the full instructions on your emergency communication device.
2. Determine whether you need licensing to operate your emergency communication device.
3. Learn alternative emergency communication sources, such as Morse code.

4. Practice using your emergency communication device regularly in order to feel comfortable using it.

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[1] one major catastrophic event: http://readynutrition.com/resources/when-the-grid-goes-down-you-better-be-ready_10022012/

[2] How to Survive the End of the World As We Know It: <http://www.amazon.com/How-Survive-End-World-Know/dp/0452295831>

[3] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/all-circuits-are-busy-emergency-collapse-communications_22032012/

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