

OPP Cell Phone/Radio Communication Protocols

CELL PHONES

- *Input mobile telephone #'s into your cell phone prior to leaving campus.*
- *The instructor and a leader in each van must keep a cell phone active at all times while traveling.*

PORTABLE RADIOS

- *Be sure that one radio with each group is on at all times between the times set for wakeup in the morning, and bedtime in the evening, whenever a group is out of direct voice contact. Battery life is very limited! Optimal life will result if each radio is on for 30 minutes, then off for 30 minutes. Do your best to cycle radio use at regular intervals during the day!*
- The instructor will monitor a radio continuously throughout the day.
- *Make radio contact with the instructor (or the AI) at intervals of not greater than one hour.* If there is no radio contact for one hour, call the instructor on your cell phone. If the instructor does not respond move quickly and safely to a point where radio reception is possible (i.e. closer to the instructor's anticipated location or to a higher point). Expect RAPID battery depletion for calls made when the signal strength is less than optimal. If the instructor (or the AI) has not heard from you for an hour he will also turn on a cell phone and seek a site with good signal strength.
- If rifle fire is heard in the vicinity, immediately call the instructor on the radio to report on your position and the relative location of the rifle fire with respect to your location.
- If you will be late on arrival at your destination or an established meeting time, *contact the instructor (or the AI) asap.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **MOST IMPORTANT:** Be sure that our safety does not depend upon successful radio contact. ***ALWAYS have a failsafe backup plan for what to do if radio or cell phone contact is NOT possible.*** Radio, cell phone and other wireless communication is often impossible due to the terrain, vegetation cover or distance between units, weak batteries, or equipment failure due to condensation, breakage, or failure of components.
- The presence of wireless communication devices can promote an unrealistic sense of security, leading to the potential for greater risk-taking by participants and leaders. ***YOU MUST ALWAYS maintain normal levels of precaution!***
- The radios (and their cases) are easily damaged! Store radios carefully, handle them gently, and keep them dry! ***You are responsible for any damage.***
- When using the Motorola radios use "***Channel 8 Code 8***" for normal conversations. Carefully note the display screen to be sure that all functions and frequencies are set properly.
- ***Make all calls as short as possible!*** Use your name first (e.g. "Bert to Ernie"). Reply with no extra words (e.g. "This is Ernie"). State your message in as few words as possible (e.g. "Where are you?" or "Your location?"). Reply in as few words as possible (e.g. "Goose Lake"). Confirm by saying "copy".
- ***Keep the volume turned up!*** Check the radio often as, the volume knob can be easily turned down (on the yellow radios).
- If the batteries seem weak, try drying and cleaning the battery contacts, and/or warming the batteries. ***Keep the batteries warm for improved performance.***
- Hold the radio vertically, and try to find a high point or at least an open area. ***Location is critical*** when using these small radios. Move as needed to improve reception.
- ***Radios and cell phones can degrade a wilderness or backcountry experience.*** Unless safety concerns dictate otherwise, please try to minimize student exposure to these devices. Try to distance yourself from the group before calling. Michael will expect a short delay in your response to a call while you distance yourself from your group. If the delay will exceed two minutes, say "standby" to confirm that you heard the call and will reply as soon as possible.