

# *The Source Information Radio Newsletter*

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## **"WINKY" Gets a Thumbs-Up**

### **Plans to Expand Its Emergency Service "across the Hill."**

IDYLLWILD, CA: One of the country's seminal Emergency Information Radio Stations is poised to expand. WNKI578, located in Idyllwild, California, has been on the air since the 1980s, providing residents and visitors with wildfire hazard information. Its footprint may soon increase over the cluster of communities perched in the San Jacinto Mountains southwest of Palm Springs.

The goal is to extend the station's 1610 AM signal farther along Highway 74 to the south and Highway 243 to the north, according to Bill Tell, of the Mile High Radio Club which manages "WINKY." The club inked an agreement in 2014 to run the operation for the Idyllwild Fire Protection District. Riverside County has recently pledged direct support for the radio station.

Tell comments, "I'm sure the fire season of 2017 had something to do with county funding. A large part should also be contributed to the Mile High Radio Club and their determined drive in making improved emergency communications within our community a top priority. Once funding becomes available, our priorities will be to continue with improvements to our primary station and then build out the synchronous stations one at a time. We've never backed down in our efforts in making our local officials aware of the importance of redundant communications." (Visit the Idyllwild Town Crier Website at <http://idyllwildtowncrier.com/2018/03/06/ifpd-working-with-radio-club-to-expand-wnki-signal/>.)

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## **Hamvention Will Use Info Radio Station to Help Congestion**

### **Amateurs use - of all things - *radio* to communicate with inbound event attendees.**

XENIA, OH: Like a match made in – well, Xenia – Amateur Radio and Information Radio will be on display at the same venue. The 2018 Amateur Radio "Hamvention" happening this weekend (May 18-20) near Dayton, Ohio, will utilize an Information Radio Station on AM 1620 as a new tool to push out traffic, parking and event details to attendees, as they approach the Greene County Fairgrounds.

Perhaps it's good that Xenia's name means "hospitality," because the town is bracing to host the influx of nearly 30,000 "HAM" radio operators – roughly doubling its population for the weekend. Due to the web of two-lane roads that serves the venue – the Greene County Fairgrounds and Expo Center - a shuttle-bus operation has been set up to alleviate traffic congestion. Helping people understand the need to park at the special shuttle lots and to find them is a key goal of the new radio service.

The Information Radio signal will blanket Xenia and 3-5 miles into surrounding Greene County, Ohio, directing approaching motorists to the five special parking facilities. Exhibiting vendor Information Station Specialists is providing the service using its portable RadioSTAT product, which will be on display in at Booth 6503 in Building Six.

(Visit <http://www.theRADIOsource.com/products/radiostat.htm> for more on RadioSTAT.)

Last year was Xenia's first experience with the event, and while largely positive, traffic and parking operations were not without hiccups the first day; and the weather did not cooperate much of the weekend. Even so, Hamvention 2017 had the second largest attendance in its 67-year history. This year, the event sponsor - Dayton Amateur Radio Association - and more than 500 local volunteers are committed to making things go even smoother.

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## Tsunami Tsurprise!

### Alaskans Treated to Tsunami Test

ALASKA, USA: What was supposed to be an internal test became a national embarrassment for NOAA's National Tsunami Warning Center on Friday, May 11, when what sounded like a tsunami warning was broadcast over radio and TV stations in the 49th state. The result will likely be further tarnishing the EAS's reputation, despite an immediate retraction and explanation posted on the Center's facebook page, *i.e.*, "No tsunami warnings issued for Alaska. There is no tsunami threat."

Various radio and TV outlets took to the air independently to advise the public that there was no tsunami threat.

The transmitted text did have a disclaimer at the end identifying it as a test, but unfortunately that part of the message was truncated by the EAS due to the message's length, which exceeded two minutes. Usually EAS tests are preceded with such a disclaimer for obvious reasons. The message's test coding was also stripped, allowing it to be sent with a warning status to radio and TV statewide.

The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is investigating how it all happened.

This is the second time an EAS problem has cropped up in Alaska this year. The FCC is looking into why certain Alaskan broadcasters and wireless companies didn't get a tsunami alert in January, when a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck offshore in the Gulf of Alaska.

With a conference scheduled in Washington, DC, today (May 15) on the topic of emergency alerting, these serious hiccups should provide some real-world examples for those seeking to improve the trustworthiness of the EAS.