

Repeater Etiquette

A note from our OARC Club Call Sign Repeater Trustee ... Larry Griffin AD7GL

Time for a reminder ... repeat from Dave's Rag Chew February 2020

Mainly, the thing to remember is, "Be Polite" ... there really isn't much more to it than that, and almost everything else comes from that. But we can explore it a little deeper. "Be Polite" means to be patient and to be helpful.

But there are other things to remember! A whole area uses the repeater. We do have club activities on the repeater: the Ham-n-Eggs Net, etc. But the rest of the time, the repeater is free to use!

Something to consider, you might not be the only one using or wanting to use the repeater. As you communicate, put some space between your responses to each other. Or, call out to see if anyone else would like to join in your conversation. The repeaters are few, the people are many. And we keep adding to our numbers with new Operators who pass the tests! It is a great opportunity for them to join in on the conversation and get on the air! If you do end up with 3 or more people in a conversation, it is best to follow a "round table" type format. Say something, offer time to the next person on the repeater, who will then offer time to the third person... etc. It will come back to you, don't worry!

I forget to do this at times... so it is as good a reminder to me as anyone else! You must identify every 10 minutes and at the end of your transmission! Even if you are rag chewing with someone and you are the only 2 people currently using the repeater... ID every 10 minutes and at the end.

It is also a good idea to let people know you are "done" ... letting them know you are at your destination, that you are "clear" or saying "73" are good indicators that you are "done" and will no longer be on the air, that you are done and no longer available for the current conversation. If you forget, don't worry... the others on the repeater will eventually figure it out!

Also, when you are using the repeater... yes, electricity travels fast through wires, but there is still a couple second delay in the repeater. Once you key the mic, give a breath or two before you start talking. This will allow the repeater to hear and recognize your signal, and get itself ready to transmit your voice!

If you want to talk on the repeater, all you have to do, usually, is call out your call sign. No need to call CQ, no need to say you are mobile or listening... although there is certainly nothing wrong with that... but the short version is, just call out your call sign! If someone is out there, feeling at all a little chatty, they'll respond. Usually only takes a few seconds... there seems to be several someone ready and willing to talk on the repeater!

Or if you know the call sign of the person you want to talk to, call out their call sign, followed by your call sign. This lets them know you want to talk to them, and who you are.

Also, Ham Radio isn't CB Radio. Don't say "Break" or "Breaker Breaker"... I won't name any names... Leave everything CB off Ham Radio.

"Break" in Ham Radio is usually reserved for Emergencies. If you use "Break, Break, Break" or "Break for priority traffic", it usually means you NEED to use the repeater, and it is very important!

On the other side of that coin, if someone uses "Break", you should immediately stop your conversation and reply, "Go ahead" (or something similar) to allow the operator to take care of the important business.

Please keep your conversations "Rated G". No one should hear profanity, or where that rash is you saw your doctor about last week. All conversations on the radio are PUBLIC. If you wouldn't say it to a child, please don't say it on the radio.

Don't sneeze, belch, or cough "on air". Unkey your mic before you do any of those.

Be aware of your car's radio... Music in the background is forbidden! And it will bring you bad luck!

Also... don't get political. Maybe avoid talking about religion on the air as well. If you think the debate at your Thanksgiving Dinner with your Relatives might get heated over these subjects, it could happen on the radio too.

Complaining about other people on the air, making fun of others, they could all fall into the category of "Bullying" or "Passive Aggressive". Neither one is good for Ham Radio. Ham radio is supposed to be fun!

Use the minimum power to make the contact. You might remember that from the class. It is especially true for repeater use! Remember, your signal only has to travel TO the repeater. After that the Repeater pumps it up to 50 watts, and everyone can hear you! The repeater doesn't give you more watts if you use more watts. The repeater gives you 50 watts even if your radio uses 1, 5, 8, 10, 15, 25, or 50 watts.