

Dear Federal Communications Commission representatives:

I am an amateur radio operator. While I derive a great deal of enjoyment from amateur radio, I obtained my amateur radio license because of the importance I placed on emergency communications.

In times of crisis, when conventional communications systems are overloaded or inoperative, there is a network of over 600,000 licensed amateur radio operators in the United States who provide vital communication services. The World Trade Center attack, the search for debris after the explosion of the space shuttle Columbia and the very recent power failure situation in the northeastern U.S. serve as recent reminders of the value and necessity of such services. Most emergency communicators supply their own equipment, power and antennas, making them a low-cost and highly effective resource. Unfortunately, amateur radio communication systems are useless in the absence of clear, low interference frequencies on which to communicate.

This is why I am so deeply concerned about the present proposal concerning Broadband over Power Lines (BPL). BPL is a proposed system to use unshielded electrical power lines to transmit line for broadband internet service, using frequencies from 2 to 80 MHz. Tests have been recently conducted which demonstrate that BPL generates interference on the order of several S-units higher than we experience today, in some cases S9 and over. Since long-distance amateur radio emergency communications typically uses frequency segments from about 3 MHz to about 30 MHz, the implementation of BPL, as it is currently proposed, will render these frequencies useless for intelligible communication. This will set aside a valuable resource that could otherwise provide a vital communication service to the public.

I urge you to consider the impact that BPL will have on emergency communications and request that the present proposal be denied.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

J. Steven Upchurch, K9WAV