



System Usage Guidelines Southeastern Wisconsin FM Amateur Repeater Society, Inc.

Introduction

If we were to look at the characteristics of an Amateur repeater system, we have to understand that what is being said by guests and by owner/members of our repeater systems is being heard by a LOT of people (and possibly your wife, mother, kids, parents, employers; the list goes on.) That being said, how we conduct ourselves as the users and owner/members of the SEWFARS repeater systems reflects not only on us, but also on people's opinion of Amateur Radio as well.

What we are attempting to do with this document is to provide some guidance on how we would like to see our repeater systems used (and what would happen if...) Please review the guidance on this document prior to, and follow the guidance when, using the SEWFARS repeater systems.

General Guidelines

FCC's Part 97 covers the statutory element of the Amateur Radio Service. In addition to following Part 97, we would like all users (this would include guests and owner/members) to follow these guidelines as well. We would love for Amateurs to use our repeater systems but we want them to be used wisely.

1. Repeaters were originally intended to enhance mobile communications. Users are highly encouraged to use operating practices that maximize availability of the repeater systems during the following times:
 - ✓ Daily Drive-to-work times
 - ✓ Inclement Weather
2. Please keep all transmissions as short as possible. Someone might need to break in with an emergency or may need some directions to a location (assuming their TomTom has gone on the fritz) or for something else. This leads us to....
3. Acknowledge new/breaking stations and allow them to speak. The calling station may need to use the repeater system immediately. He or she may have an emergency to handle, so let him or her make a transmission promptly.
4. Please make sure that the subject matter and the language being used projects only the best possible image for you, the people you are conversing with, SEWFARS and the Amateur Radio Service. When in doubt, please don't say it on the air. ☺
5. Unless it is an emergency, please do not break into a conversation unless you intend on contributing to the subject being discussed. This is rude in personal conversations. It is just as rude on the air. Now that we have said, this...
6. If you hear, or are involved with the emergency call for help, please do whatever you can to establish contact with the station/person needing assistance and immediately pass the necessary information on to the proper authorities. We would like to know any time that this happens, so please note the date and time of the call, what the incident was and notify SEWFARS at the contact information given at the beginning of this document (upper right hand corner of this page) that you were involved with the incident.
7. Whenever possible please take your conversations to a simplex frequency. Not only is it more fun, it also frees up the repeater system for others to use.
8. Transmit your call sign at the end of a contact and at least every 10 minutes during the course of any communication. Not only is this a good idea, it is the law (take a look at 97.119 and you'll see what we mean.) *NOTE: You do not have to transmit the call sign of the station to whom you are transmitting.*
9. Resetting of the repeater time-out timer during a transmission is bad practice. Please don't do it. The time out timers are set to three minutes. If you cannot say what you need to say in three minutes then there is a problem someplace (and it ain't with the repeaters.)
10. Please allow a one or two second pause between transmissions. The repeaters do not have a courtesy tone (well-trained Amateurs do not need them) but our system time-out timers reset when the receive signal is removed (in other words, when the user's mic button is released.) *Hint: If the repeater transmitter's carrier drops, the pause was too long.*
11. Usage conflicts will try to be resolved in the most sensible manner and off-air. (Bottom line: We do not want to air the dirty laundry in public.)
12. Use plain English language at all times. Though use of words of profanity is considered plain language by some people, use of profanity is illegal under Part 97 and will not be tolerated under any circumstances on the SEWFARS repeater systems. That being said, this leads to...
13. Please do not use Q-signals on our repeater systems. Well trained Amateurs do not use Q-signals on voice modes. Believe it or not this is actually used to be an answer to a test question on the General class license exam in the '70s and '80s.
14. Part 97 allows certain personal transactions to be conducted in the Amateur Radio Service. Use of the SEWFARS repeater systems to conduct those transactions is not allowed.



Please Be Mindful of System Usage Times

Regardless of whether you are a guest or a owner/member, please be reasonable and discretionary with respect to your daily usage times. We want people to use our systems, but if we see people regularly abusing the systems (SEWFARS sets the guidelines for that) then we will take necessary action.

Please note that there will be exceptions to the above guidance. SEWFARS has operating and support agreements with a number of service organizations and they would be using the repeater systems for extended periods of time. People traveling through the area may also be on for extended periods of time.

Please Be Mindful of the Subject Matter Being Discussed

In order to promote a positive on-air environment on their repeater systems, SEWFARS control operators will be listening for the following activities and will be taking necessary action if the topics below are discussed:

- ✓ derogatory comments towards any person or group of people
- ✓ discussion of sensitive or questionable topics
- ✓ disciplinary action measures taken towards users
- ✓ communications using cutsey-type words, lingo, jargon, and other non-common language
- ✓ discussion of topics considered to be in poor taste for a public forum or resource
- ✓ discussion involving activities deemed illegal under Federal, State or Local Statutes
- ✓ discussion of activities meant to avert Federal, State or Local law enforcement efforts
- ✓ other communications that the control operator staff deems as inappropriate and/or inconsistent with SEWFARS goals.

Please Show Examples of Good Operating Practice

Many people learn by example. Some of those examples are regarded as good ones. Some examples can be looked at as "what not to do." Please do your best to follow good practices when using the SEWFARS repeater systems. Please note the following operating practices are prohibited on any SEWFARS repeater system:

- ✓ resetting of the controller timer to extend length of a transmission
- ✓ "soapboxing" or any other activity that unnecessarily limits resource availability to other users
- ✓ excessive pauses between transmissions, creating long periods of dead-air time within a conversation. It is better to clear off and call later rather than tie up the system and not let others use it if they need to do so. *HINT: if the repeater transmitter drops, the pause was too long. NOTE: a short pause is recommended to allow users to break in for an emergency.*
- ✓ other operating practices that the control operator staff deems as inappropriate and/or inconsistent with SEWFARS goals.

Users Who Do Not Adhere to the Guidelines Will be Subject to Disciplinary Action

Despite the guidance provided by us for what to do (and in some cases, what not to do) we do have users who want to stretch the limits, and in some cases they just plain "do not get it." When these situations happen we have taken, and will take necessary action to protect our repeater systems from abuse.

Bottom line: Enjoy the use of our repeater systems but please use them wisely and with courtesy.

This document is subject to revision without notice.

SEWFARS, Incorporated

March 2011

Revision History

<u>Rev.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	March 27 2008	Clarified the Definition of System Usage
2	March 17 2011	General Revisions