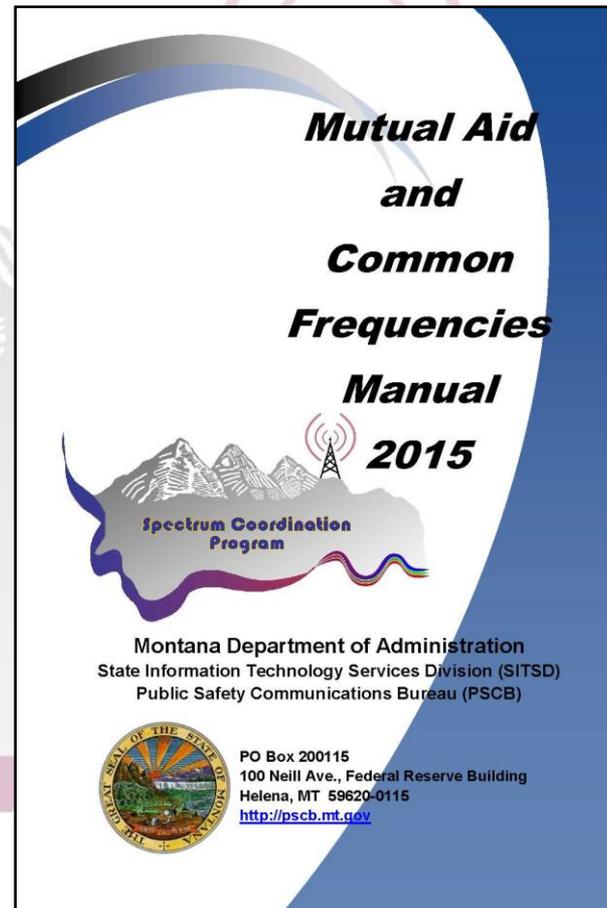


Montana *Mutual Aid* *and Common* *Frequencies* Program

Spring, 2015

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual

- DOA holds statewide licenses for more than 20 mutual aid frequencies.
- The *Manual* contains SOPs for their use.



Mutual Aid Radio Advisory Councils

We rely on guidance for mutual aid and common frequencies SOPs from:

- **Mutual Aid Radio Advisory Councils:**

- Law Enforcement
- Fire, and
- EMS

- **Subject Matter Experts**

- Dept. of Military Affairs/DES
- Search and Rescue Members
- U.S. Forest Service
- A variety of local jurisdictions

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual

- The manual is updated on a regular basis and is reprinted about every three years.
 - Printed copies of the 2015 Manual are available.
 - Also available are printed visor cards.

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Manual

- A full-color online version of the manual is available at this link:
<http://sitsd.mt.gov/mutual-aid-freq.aspx>
- Wallet and visor cards also may be downloaded from the site.
- Updates to the Manual are posted on the website, too.



connecting information and people

STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION

HOME

SERVICES & SUPPORT

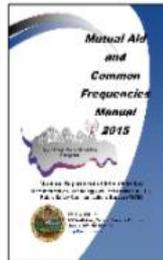
GOVERNANCE

VENDOR GATEWAY

ABOUT US

MUTUAL AID FREQUENCIES

[PSCB Home](#)



The Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequency Manual includes the standard operating procedures and practical applications for using statewide VHF radio frequencies for mutual aid and common use. Emergency responders from different agencies and jurisdictions use these radio frequencies to communicate during incidents and disasters.

Mutual Aid Frequency Resources:

- [2015 Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequency Manual \(PDF\)](#)
- [2015 Mutual Aid Frequency Wallet Cards](#) (Be sure to print back-to-back.)
- [2015 Mutual Aid Frequency Visor Cards](#) (Be sure to print back-to-back.)
- [Mutual Aid Frequencies for Fire Agencies Factsheet](#)
- [Request a Mutual Aid Frequency Use Permit](#)

Mutual Aid Frequency Updates:

- **Border Interoperability Channel Modification for Public Safety Communications South of the US-Canadian Border:** The VLOW31 (155.4750 MHz) BLUE Channel can now be used as a general purpose mutual aid interoperability channel for cross-agency use with Canadian responders within 16 km (10 mi) of the US-Canadian border in Montana. Agencies eligible to use the frequency have been expanded to local, state, tribal, federal and Canadian law enforcement, EMS and fire responders. This additional authorization is designed to enhance cross-border radio communications.
- **North Dakota Frequency Advisory:** A number of North Dakota agencies may have tone control on the receive side of commonly used mutual aid frequencies. [Click here](#) to view the Frequency Advisory.

Visor Cards

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Visor Card					
	Local Channel	Color Name	National Designation	Frequency (MHz)	Usage
General Use		GOLD		153.9050	General Mutual Aid & Coordination
		TAN (Primary)	VMED28	155.3400	State Air-to-Ground Coordination
		NEON		157.4250	General Mutual Aid & Coordination
		ALPHA		172.2250 Base TX	General Use Multi-Agency Mobile Repeater
		BRAVO		172.3750 Base TX	General Use Multi-Agency Mobile Repeater
Law Enforcement		BLUE	VLAWE31	155.4750	National Law Enforcement Emergency
		SILVER		155.7900	State Law Enforcement Mutual Aid
		BLACK		153.8000	Law Enforcement Tactical
EMS		WHITE		155.2800	Hospital-to-Ambulance & Hospital-to-Hospital Communications
		GRAY		155.3250	Central Region Dispatch & Paging
		PINK		155.3850	Western/Eastern Region Dispatch & Paging
		TAN (Secondary)	VMED28	155.3400	EMS Communications & Medical Staging at an Incident Scene

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies - Visor Card					
	Local Channel	Color Name	National Designation	Frequency (MHz)	Usage
Fire		RUBY		153.8300	State Fire Repeater
		RED		154.0700	State Fire Mutual Aid
		MAROON	VFIRE21	154.2800	State Fire Command and Control
		CORAL	VFIRE22	154.2650	State Fire Ground # 1
		SCARLET	VFIRE23	154.2950	State Fire Ground # 2
		COPPER	VFIRE24	154.2725	State Fire Ground # 3
		BURGANDY	VFIRE25	154.2875	State Fire Ground # 4
		CRIMSON	VFIRE26	154.3025	State Fire Ground # 5
		GARNET		159.3450	State Fire Repeater Control
Common		VIOLET		155.1600	National Search and Rescue
		PURPLE		155.2200	State Search and Rescue
		BROWN		155.8200	State DES Direction and Control
		GREEN		171.4750	State/Federal Common State Forestry & Conservation
Interop Channels		CHARLIE		154.4525	General Purpose Interoperability Channels for Interagency Communications
		DELTA		155.7525	
		ECHO		158.7375	
		FOX		159.4725	

Mutual Aid Permits

- Public safety agencies have to request permission to operate on FCC frequency licenses granted and assigned to the State of Montana.
- Why? Required by the FCC.
- Mutual aid permits that are issued via the State's online permitting system give such permission.
- Permits must be kept current to avoid compliance issues with the FCC.

Mutual Aid Online Permitting Website

- Redesigned and updated.
- Now requires contact information for two individuals.
- Easy to use.
- Permits issued electronically.
- Permits are good for five years.

Mutual Aid Online Permitting Website

Mutual Aid Frequencies Permit Request

[Instructions](#) [How Do I](#) [Feedback](#)

Welcome

Welcome to the Mutual Aid Frequencies Permit Request service. Please select an option below to begin.

[Request New Permit](#) [Find a Permit](#)

About The Mutual Aid Services

Effective Public-Safety Response

Mutual aid frequencies can enhance your communications and help ensure an effective public-safety response.

[TRY THE DEMO](#)

General Information

General Information

The State of Montana holds statewide licenses with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for more than 20 mutual aid frequencies. These licenses are held to allow other eligible public safety users access to these shared frequencies. However, prior to programming the frequencies in radios, users must secure a valid permit giving them permission to use specific mutual aid frequencies. So, you're at the right place to start the process.

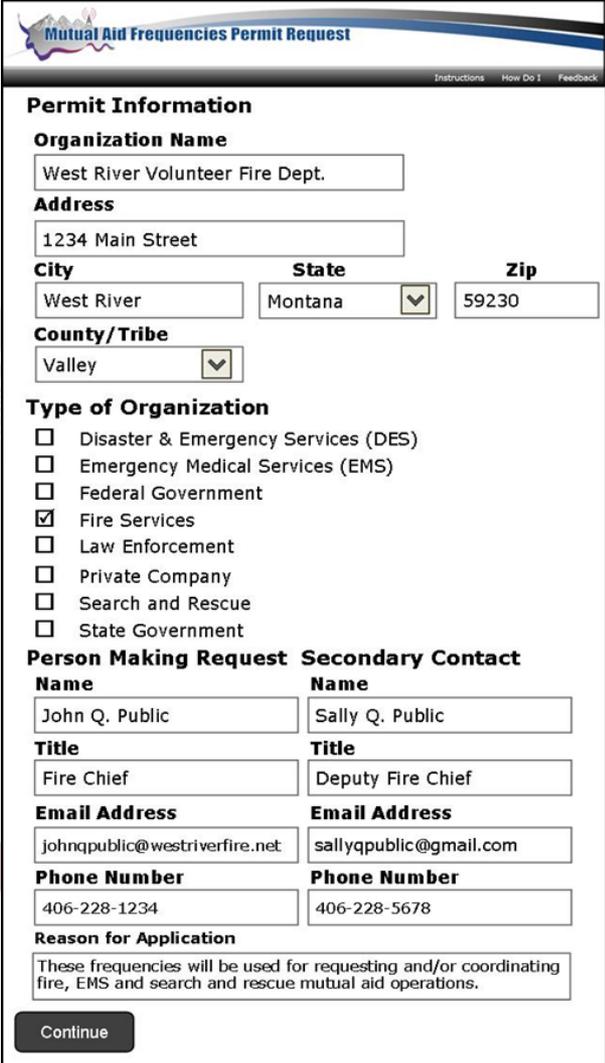
[Contact Information](#)

Mutual Aid Permits

- Generally, a single permit is issued for a specific organization.
 - A county Sheriff's Office would apply for its own mutual aid frequency permit separate from the county Fire Department.
 - Each agency is issued a mutual aid permit under its own name.

How to Apply for a Mutual Aid Permit

- The application process is simple.
- Go to this link:
<https://app.mt.gov/mutualaid/>
- Click on the “Request a New Permit” button.
- **Step 1:**
 - Complete the required information for the agency, including contact information and e-mail addresses.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Mutual Aid Frequencies Permit Request". The form is divided into several sections:

- Permit Information**
 - Organization Name:** West River Volunteer Fire Dept.
 - Address:** 1234 Main Street
 - City:** West River
 - State:** Montana
 - Zip:** 59230
 - County/Tribe:** Valley
- Type of Organization**
 - Disaster & Emergency Services (DES)
 - Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
 - Federal Government
 - Fire Services
 - Law Enforcement
 - Private Company
 - Search and Rescue
 - State Government
- Person Making Request**
 - Name:** John Q. Public
 - Title:** Fire Chief
 - Email Address:** johnqpublic@westriverfire.net
 - Phone Number:** 406-228-1234
- Secondary Contact**
 - Name:** Sally Q. Public
 - Title:** Deputy Fire Chief
 - Email Address:** sallyqpublic@gmail.com
 - Phone Number:** 406-228-5678
- Reason for Application:** These frequencies will be used for requesting and/or coordinating fire, EMS and search and rescue mutual aid operations.

At the bottom of the form is a "Continue" button.

How to Apply for a Mutual Aid Permit

- **Step 2:** Select the frequencies the agency:
 - Is eligible for
 - Is already using
 - Wants to use in their radios.
- Click on links to “Restriction Maps” to see if you can use certain frequencies in your location.
- Refer to the Mutual Aid Manual for advice on eligibility
- Click “Continue.”

STEP 2

Please choose the frequencies you wish to request from the list below:

General Use

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 153.9050 GOLD | State Common Mutual Aid |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 155.3400 TAN (VMED28) | Statewide Air-to-Ground Coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 157.4250 NEON | General Mutual Aid and Coordination |

Restrictions:

- 40-Watt Mobile Limit
- Not available within 120 km of Coultts, AB, including the following jurisdictions: Blackfeet Reservation and Glacier, Liberty, Pondera and Toole Counties.
- Not available in: Daniels, McCone, Richland, Roosevelt and Valley Counties or on the Fort Peck Reservation.
- **NEON Restriction Map**

Additional General Use Mutual Aid Frequencies (Not Available Statewide)

General purpose interoperability channels for all law enforcement, fire, EMS and medical agencies including local, state, tribal and federal users. Approval pending review of agency communication plan and evaluation of non-interference with existing users. **Requires use of CTCSS tone 156.7 on the Transmit (TX) side.**

- 154.4525 **CHARLIE (VTAC12) Tactical General Use Interoperability**
 - Secondary status to existing co-channel and 7.5 kHz adjacent channels in the following counties: Broadwater, Cascade, Jefferson, Hill, Lewis and Clark and Powell.
 - **CHARLIE Restriction Map**
- 155.7525 **DELTA (VCALL10) Tactical General Use Interoperability**
 - Secondary status to existing co-channel and 7.5 kHz adjacent channels in the following counties: Broadwater, Cascade, Jefferson, Hill, Lewis and Clark and Powell.
 - **DELTA Restriction Map**
- 158.7375 **ECHO (VTAC13) Tactical General Use Interoperability**
 - Not available above Line A per FCC license except at these Interoperability Repeater Sites: **Highwood Baldy** (Judith Basin County), **Mount Royal** (Liberty County), **SACO** (Phillips County) and **Windy Hill** (Roosevelt County/Fort Peck). Use channels 154.4525 MHz Repeater TX/159.4725 MHz Mobile TX.
 - Not available in Lake and Missoula Counties.
 - Secondary status for mutual aid use in the following counties: Granite, Mineral, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders and within 20 km of Maverick Mountain in Beaverhead County.
 - **ECHO Restriction Map**

How to Apply for a Mutual Aid Permit

Step 3:

- Print a receipt for your records.
- Personnel in PSCB receive an automatic e-mail telling them that a request is pending.
- PSCB processes the request.
- Once approved, a link to the permit is sent.
- The applicant can print it out for their records.

STEP 3

Print this page for your reference.

Organization Name: West River Volunteer Fire Dept.

You have submitted a request for permission to use the following frequencies:

153.9050 **GOLD** - State Common Mutual Aid
155.3400 **TAN** - Statewide Air-to-Ground Coordination
158.7375 **ECHO** - Tactical General Use Interoperability
151.1375 **GOLF** - Tactical General Use Interoperability
155.4750 **BLUE** - General Purpose Border Interoperability
153.8300 **RUBY** - State Fire Repeater
154.0700 **RED** - State Fire Mutual Aid
154.2650 **CORAL** - State Fire Ground #1
154.2725 **COPPER** - State Fire Ground #3
154.2800 **MAROON** - State Fire Command and Control
154.2875 **BURGUNDY** - State Fire Ground #4
154.2950 **SCARLET** - State Fire Ground #2
154.3025 **CRIMSON** - State Fire Ground #5
159.3450 **GARNET** - State Fire Repeater Control
172.2250 **ALPHA** - Interagency Fire Use Only
172.3750 **BRAVO** - Interagency Fire Use Only
155.2800 **WHITE** - Hospital-to-Ambulance and Hospital-to-Hospital
155.3850 **PINK** - EMS East/West Dispatch & Paging
155.1600 **VIOLET** - National Search and Rescue
155.2200 **PURPLE** - State Search and Rescue

Date Submitted: 8/26/2015 11:42:29 AM

Requested by:

John Q. Public
Fire Chief
johnqpublic@westriverfire.net

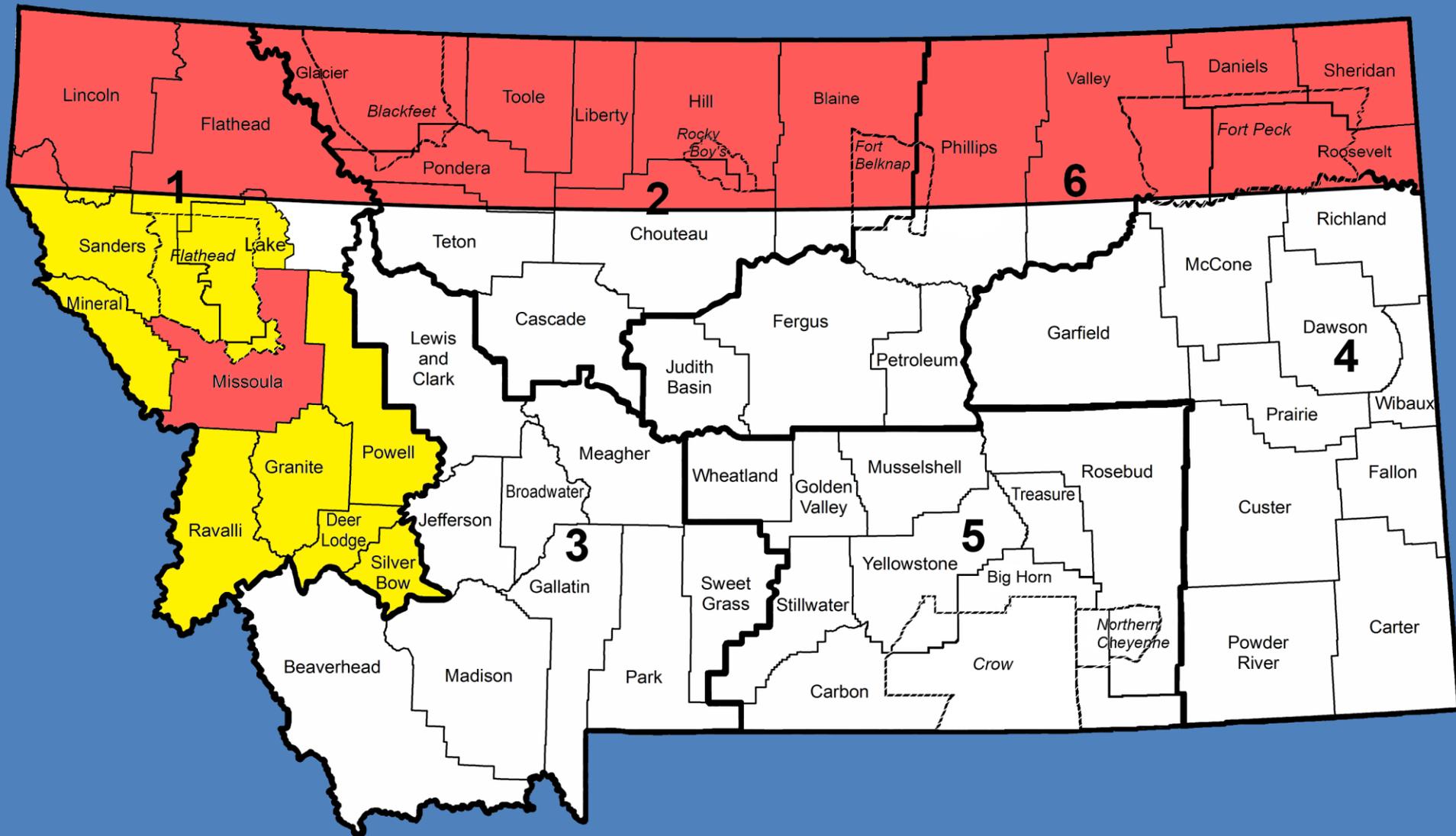
Four Major Changes to the 2015 Manual

1. Continuous Tone-Coded Squelch System (CTCSS) now required

- CTCSS, or “tone control” protects frequencies from interference from adjacent users.
- Mutual aid frequencies should now be programmed with CTCSS tone of 156.7 Hz on the *transmit* side.

2. Statewide maps were added to show where certain frequencies have restricted use.

DELTA Restriction Map



Four Major Changes to the 2015 Manual

3. New Border Interoperability Frequency

- A general purpose mutual aid interoperability channel for cross-agency use with Canadian responders
- May be permitted for use within 16 km (10 mi) of the US-Canadian border in Montana by *all* public safety agencies in border areas.
- Referred to as “**BLUE-VLAW31**”

Four Major Changes to the 2015 Manual

- “Color names” have historically been used to refer to different mutual aid frequencies.
 - However, a national channel naming convention has now been established.
 - Applies to nationwide interoperability channels.
- 4. Recommendation that agencies include both the “color name” and the National Interoperability Designator (i.e. VLAW, VFIRE, VMED)**
- Communication plans
 - Names on radios

Montana *Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies* Program

Thank you in advance for your help with communicating the need for public safety agencies to apply for a permit to use Montana's mutual aid frequencies.

Questions or Suggestions?

Contact:

E. Wing Spooner

Public Safety Communications Bureau

406-444-2491

espooner@mt.gov

