

Why a Pager Is a Must for First Responders

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In this age of technology it seems there's an overload of communication devices: cell phones, PDAs, e-mail, websites and the list goes on and on. While it may be tempting for companies to allow employees to use these devices that isn't true for the medical industry, especially first responders.

First responders do not always need two-way communications, in fact, sometimes the two-way communication devices can cause more danger and hazards for the first responder. In addition, these devices can be inherently unreliable, which presents another set of issues for a first responder to manage. For these personnel, it's critical to have a safe, dependable and tested form of communication. These individuals need the best resource for communication, which is still the pager.

Pagers remain to be one of the most reliable methods to transmit information to first responders who may be in dangerous and chaotic situations. Pagers also have greater reliability and work in situations where cellular phones will fail. Paging systems feature high power transmission of up to 3,500 watts effective power, while typical cellular systems have power of 100 watts. Additionally, the simulcast network a pager operates from provides simultaneous delivery of a radio signal from several transmitters providing wider coverage area and better in-building penetration than other technologies. In comparison, cellular type networks assign a single channel in a single transmitter to a mobile connection with a smaller range and then rely on the network to "hand off" the call to another tower, if there is a channel available and not overloaded. Paging systems can easily designate priorities and block or limit non-critical users automatically for periods of time when it's imperative the emergency users have priority access. Pagers are also not subject to terrestrial failure. Should a tower go down for pager communications, one can easily and quickly be erected and done so even in the back of a pick-up truck. The same does not hold true for cell phone towers.

What does all this mean to the first responder? It means the safety and ability of first responders will not be compromised by equipment failure. Emergency personnel deserve and need to have reliable and effective communication in any given situation. Cellular services are not as reliable. Whether inside a building, a natural disaster, a terrorist attack, an underground structure, a rural location or just a dead or overloaded cellular zone of a neighborhood, the pager will still work so messages and essential information can be relayed to those on the front lines. Pagers also have a long battery life and a first responder will not find himself/herself in a situation where the communication device needs to be charged and won't work. It's also been proven time and time again, that pagers are the only effective way to communicate mass message simultaneously whether those messages are going to first responders or other groups of people who need emergency information. In situations of natural disasters, this type of communication is not only necessary, but can mean the difference between life and death. And, in situations where flammable chemicals are present, pagers are non-incendive and incapable of releasing sufficient electrical or thermal energy to cause an explosion. This provides safety and comfort for those putting themselves in harm's way.

For first responders there really is no other reliable, safe and effective means of communication than a pager. They are intrinsically safe devices, dependable and durable. The pager has withstood the test of time and proven itself as the leader in communication devices year after year for the most important people in any emergency situation, the first responder. When other communication devices fail, the pager will keep on working to ensure the first responder does their job like the professionals they are. Pagers for first responders are a must!

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