

Richardson Co Communications Problems Continue

(KLZA)-- Topography and the large area of Richardson County have long made radio communications difficult for the Sheriff's Office, Road Department and at times for Emergency Management. Ideally, all three would be able to communicate with each other utilizing one system.

In the past few months, Highway Superintendent Scott Huppert says the Road Department communication problems have worsened. Huppert reported employees having to use their personal cell phones to communicate when radios do not work. He said it opens the County up to possible lawsuits if an employee were to be injured and had no way to call for help.

During Tuesday's Richardson County Commissioners meeting Huppert and Emergency Management Director Brian Dixon, who was recently put in charge of County Radio Communications discussed the issues and problems being encountered. Dixon says the biggest issue is a cobbled together and horrendously managed for at least the past 15 years.

Over the years radio towers, water towers, microwave towers have all been utilized to try and solve the communication problems. Tuesday, Commissioners approved the expenditure of more than \$3,400 for electrical work on a county-owned tower in the Barada area. Once done then new radio equipment can be installed there, which will cost several thousand dollars more. The Board also approved the expenditure of more than \$7,300 for radio equipment at a tower site at Humboldt.

Haag Communications also offered to rent space on a tower they own at \$100 per month. Dixon said he felt the County should utilize the Barada tower the county owns and utilize the Humboldt tower site that is available for free.

Dixon said that he understands the issues and has a plan to fix the issues, but for now he has a temporary fix. He said he is 100-percent against having Haag work on fixing the Road Department issues at this time.

Temporarily the Sheriff's Office communications is working because of the utilization of a mobile emergency operations center trailer, connected to an antenna at Humboldt.

Many Signals Communications