

ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY SAFETY BULLETIN

****Safety Advisory****

800MHz Radio and Fire Shelter Use

The following is an important change in procedures when deploying your fire shelter and using the 800 MHz Radio. *This concern only addresses the "800 MHz Radio" and is not applicable to the Bendix King pack set or the NIFC cache radios.*

It has come to our attention that the 800 MHz radio signal will not penetrate the material of the fire shelter. The material of the shelter won't let you transmit to the outside of the shelter or receive messages while inside the shelter. In effect, the material of the shelter blocks all 800 MHz radio waves. The radio waves will "bounce around" inside the shelter. All tactical frequencies are subject to this problem. When you enter the shelter your 800 MHz will give you a "Out of Range" messages. The Talk-a-Round channels do work but for an extremely limited distance and line of sight only which will be of little or no assistance. Further more, this "bouncing waves" can cause harm (burn) to the retina of your eyes by keeping the signal inside the shelter. Additionally, this "bounce effect" can damage the transmitter function of the radio rendering it inoperable. You are directed to take the following actions when fire shelter deployment is imminent!

- Notify your immediate supervisor of the situation and your position and plan.
- Notify your supervisor when you have reached your safety zone.
- Report your deployment position to your immediate supervisor, number of personnel deploying, prepare the ground, and order deployment.
- Ensure all personnel are sheltered and make a final check of the area for employees in distress or in need of assistance.
- Announce to your immediate supervisor that you are sheltering and that this will be your last transmission until the danger has passed. Don't attempt to use the 800 MHz Radio while inside the fire shelters.