

August 24, 1942

FIRST LICENSES FOR CIVILIAN DEFENSE RADIOS GRANTED

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The first licenses to be granted by the Federal Communications Commission under newly-established regulations for civilian defense radio systems have been issued by the Commission to the City of Akron, Ohio, and the City of Lawrence, Massachusetts. Classified as War Emergency Radio Service these stations extend the organized civilian units functioning under the Office of Civilian Defense. In event of air raids or other enemy action which destroy other forms of communications, the emergency radio will be available to coordinate rescue and repair work.

Under the terms of the licenses granted Akron will have a two-way low-powered radio system of sixteen receiver-transmitters. Some of these will be in fixed locations, others will be mobile and a few will be of the type known as "walkie-talkies" because the operator may use it while moving about. Lawrence, Massachusetts, has been licensed for a system of eleven two-way radios.

Applications of many other cities are now pending at the FCC and requests from the different communities vary to fit local conditions. Fort Wayne, Ind., has plans for more than one hundred such sets, while Dayton, Ohio, indicates that forty radios will serve its needs. Some applications are being returned to municipalities because the forms fail to indicate what arrangements exist for liaison with Defense Commanders for the purpose of receiving orders of radio silence when conditions dictate. Regulations of the FCC require that the licenses be issued to the municipal governments proper rather than any of the departments.

Formation of the War Emergency Radio Service was announced jointly by the FCC and the OCD last June 13 at which time it was explained that radio amateurs, repairmen and others having sufficient experience would be asked to volunteer and serve in the operation of the civil defense radio systems. The two-way radios operate on ultra short-waves with power sufficiently low to limit their range to approximately ten miles. Spare parts laying around radio repair shops are considered sufficient to construct these radios, engineers declare.

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