

## **NARROWBANDING**

The Federal Communications Commission has ordered a change in how Public Safety radios operating below 512 MHz work. The change requires radios to use less bandwidth (spectrum) and to form new channels with the bandwidth left over. The FCC has decided to implement the new narrowband frequencies in two phases; phase one will split the existing usable bandwidth in half to double the channels. Phase two will divide the channels again sometime in the future

The final deadline for phase one is January 1, 2013 for all EMS providers that operate two way radios on the State of New Mexico Emergency Medical Services Communication System.

In order to meet the new narrowband requirements for equipment, the following plan will help with the transition:

Note- The objectives in this plan may be accomplished sooner than the listed operational periods.

Operational period: January 1, 2010 – January 1, 2011

1. Inventory radio equipment and determine if the equipment is able to accommodate the narrowband frequencies
2. Base station and repeater operations (licensees) must apply for new narrowband licenses or modify their existing license
3. Start the budget process to purchase new equipment if needed.
4. Work with vendors to identify and replace any connector, antenna, Coax, etc. to prevent signal loss.

Operational period: January 1, 2011 – January 1, 2012

1. Purchase and install (or issue) new narrowband capable equipment.
2. Conduct initial narrowband testing for your response area (radio checks: base station to base station, base station to mobile/portable, mobile/portable to mobile/portable)
3. Identify problems with equipment and coverage
4. Work with vendors to minimize/eliminate problems.
5. A state wide test schedule will be issued January 1, 2012.