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Emergency Workers Lose Radio Communication

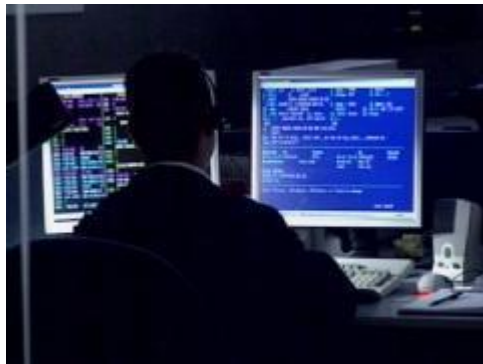
Palm Beach County First-Responder Radios Lose Frequencies For More Than 45 Minutes

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PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. -- First-responders in Palm Beach County lost all radio communication Thursday night.

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Palm Beach County Fire Rescue, the West Palm Beach Police Department and other local agencies were all without communication for more than 45 minutes.



First-responders lost all radio contact with dispatchers for more than 45 minutes Thursday night.

Dispatchers use radio frequencies to send first-responders to emergencies.

The system broke down just before 9 p.m. The agencies had to rely on cell phones and pagers to get crews around.

A spokesman for Palm Beach County Fire Rescue said the department was able to make it to all of its emergency calls using backup systems, like text pagers.

"All the pages still went out to them on their pagers, so they knew when a call came in and they knew where to go to respond to the calls," Capt. Don

DeLucia said. "As far as actually communicating to the individual crews, once they got out on the road, we resorted to cell phones, whatever communication system we could think of."

Officials said a communication blackout like this is rare, and the last time it happened was during a hurricane.

Engineers said they're working to find the exact cause of the problem.

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