

*The following traffic was carried on the Monroe County Amateur Radio Network on Monday November 11, 2002.*

Good Evening. This is Governor Frank O'Bannon speaking to the Amateur Radio Operators of Monroe and surrounding counties.

Your radio operators were the first to report that a tornado was on the ground near Ellettsville Friday, September 20th. The tornados that hit Indiana that day continued on a 140 mile path of destruction, through Martinsville, Greenwood, and Indianapolis before ending near Anderson. As I flew over the tornado track the next morning, I witnessed the incredible property destruction wrought by this natural disaster. And while several of our citizens were seriously hurt, miraculously there were no fatalities.

I understand that Russ (N9DHX) and Mike (KB9SGN) reported the tornado to your net control operator (Mike, N9RGI) and that Dwight (WB9TLH) relayed that information to the National Weather Service within seconds of the tornado touch-down. This allowed the National Weather Service to give advance warning to Morgan, Johnson, Marion, and other counties. I believe that the early warning provided by your group saved many, many lives in Martinsville and Indianapolis.

Once the tornado passed, the Amateur radio operators of Monroe County rallied to provide emergency communications supporting rescue, damage assessment, and disaster recovery in coordination with the Red Cross and local emergency agencies over the following days.

Over the past 50 plus years, each Governor has known that while other communications may fail, our Amateur Radio operators never fail to provide emergency communications. While each of you holds an Amateur radio license, you are true professionals. For all your work, you have my profound gratitude.

Thank you and good night. This is Governor O'Bannon signing off. Over to net control.