



Estes Park AM radio station closer to reality

AM 1470 testing scheduled to begin next week with 'go live' target date in January 2015

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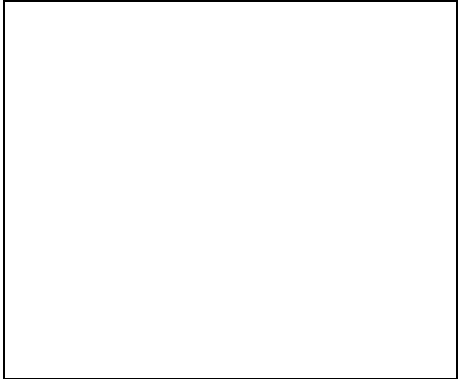


A crew from Estes Park Light and Power installs the AM radio antenna on Nov. 7, the first step to establishing an emergency radio station by January, 2015. (Courtesy Photo)

Estes Park is moving closer going "on the air" with a local AM radio station that is scheduled to go live in January 2015. Status of the project was updated during last Thursday's public safety committee meeting. Commander Eric Rose gave a presentation on the installation of an AM antenna on Prospect Mountain, the first step to establishing an emergency radio station which was made possible by the recent 1% local sales tax increase.

With help from personnel of Estes Park Light & Power, the antenna was installed on November 7, said Rose.

"An AM antenna is not a power antenna, it needs to be grounded," Rose explained on Thursday; since there are difficulties in grounding in the Rocky Mountains, "We are purchasing grounding



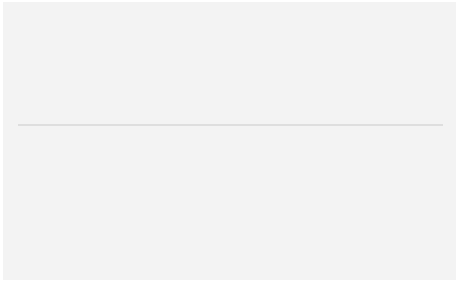
system, which will be here on Monday, consisting of a spoked wheel of copper" which will be soldered is around the pole, approximately two feet underground.

This week, the grounding system and transmitter will be installed at the site. The "radio shack" is a Bureau of Reclamation building on Prospect Mountain which also currently houses equipment the Town uses for FM transmissions, Rose said. The transmitter for the AM emergency radio station will be located in this building; but, the software to run the broadcasts will be located in Town Hall.

The station, which will be using 1470 AM, will begin test broadcasting the week of Nov. 21 with an official broadcasting premier scheduled for January, 2015. This will be an emergency and traffic-conditions broadcasting station only, said Rose.

Also for 2015, "we are working on signage around town with flashing beacons (in case of an emergency) to put people to AM 1470," Rose said.

"We expect the station to be operational soon, but will be working on programming and a public roll-out by early 2015," said Kate Rusch, the Town's public information officer in a statement after the meeting.



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