

# Guidelines for the WVARA E-Mail Discussion Group

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The Wabash Valley Amateur Radio Association (WVARA) maintains a Google Group for the discussion of topics related to amateur radio and to exchange information about amateur radio. Membership in the group is open to any individual with an interest in amateur radio. It is not limited to members of the WVARA, or even to licensed amateur radio operators.

This document outlines guidelines for use of the WVARA e-mail discussion group.

## Acceptable Topics

The following topics are acceptable for posting to the WVARA group:

- Messages relating to any aspect of amateur radio, such as but not limited to: operating, modes, propagation, equipment, antennas, amateur radio software, DX & contests, amateur radio meetings, nets, etc.
- Messages offering amateur radio related items for sale or trade.

The following topics are not acceptable for posting to the WVARA group:

- Messages not related to amateur radio.
- Personal attacks or messages that call into question a person's truthfulness or integrity.
  - It is perfectly acceptable to disagree with someone, but it must be done in a courteous and professional manner.
  - Don't challenge or attack others. The discussions on the group are meant to stimulate conversation not to create contention.
- Messages that refer to controversial topics not related to amateur radio, such as politics or religion.
- Messages that contain indecent, obscene, or profane language or meaning.
- Spam.

Due to the fact that the group includes individuals who are not members of the WVARA, messages to publicly debate or dispute the policies of the WVARA probably should not be posted to the group. They are better served using a different venue. Any member wishing to comment on or recommend changes to the policies of the WVARA should do so either by contacting an Executive Board member, by personal appearance at any Board meeting, or by e-mail to the Board. An e-mail message can be sent to all of the Board members at once by addressing it to [wvaraboard@w9uuu.org](mailto:wvaraboard@w9uuu.org) along with your comment or suggestion.

## Message Content

Communicating via e-mail is different than a face-to-face conversation. When having a conversation, a large portion of the meaning conveyed is through tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language. In an e-mail, you only have the words. Therefore, it is important to choose your words carefully to be certain that you are not misunderstood.

The following guidelines are helpful:

- Be careful with the tone of your message. It is easy for readers to interpret your message differently than what you meant. In particular, it is easy to read anger into a message, when none was intended. Similarly, jokes and sarcastic remarks are frequently misconstrued. You may want to include special symbols to point out your attempts at humor. The standard smiley :-)) is the most frequently used symbol to convey humor.
- Be friendly and patient. We are volunteers, and so a sense of fun is part of why we do what we do. Be positive and engaging, rather than snarky.
- Be civil and considerate. Disagreement is not an excuse for poor conduct or personal attacks.
- Keep your messages short and focused and preferably only cover one point in an e-mail.
- When replying to a previous message:
  - Include relevant text from the original message. Trim it to the minimum, but do not overdo it. It should still be possible for somebody who did not read the original message to understand what you are talking about.
  - Replying to a message and leaving intact all previous replies is not usually useful or desirable.
  - If something seems outrageous, check that you did not misinterpret it. Ask for clarification, rather than assuming the worst.
- Check your spelling and correct all errors before you send your message.

## Group Management Policies

Any or all of the following punitive measures may be taken against group members who persistently fail to comply with the guidelines as to what is or is not acceptable content:

- A warning that their messages are not appropriate and that additional punitive measures can and will be taken if they continue to post messages that do not comply with the guidelines.
- Changed to “moderated” status. This means that their messages must be reviewed and approved by a group administrator before being allowed to post to the group. Due to the way that Google Groups work, this will mean a delay of 24-48 hours before any messages that are approved are posted to the group.
- Removed from the group.