

Part 15 Broadcasting

Is NOT

“Pirate Radio” !

With the F.C.C (Federal Communications Commission) stepping up enforcement of pirate radio stations, it is important to know the difference between “Part 15 Broadcasting” and “Pirate Radio”

Pirate Radio is generally defined as broadcasting on the AM or FM band (as well as at other locations on the radio dial) without a license or authorization from the F.C.C. Pirate Radio often makes a mess of the broadcast frequencies, causes interference to licensed broadcasters, and are in violation of Federal laws. Often the perception of a pirate station can be confused with a fully legal and authorized Part 15 broadcast station that requires no license.

Part 15 Broadcasting has a long and rich history in the United States dating back to the 1930's. Part 15 Broadcasting is sometimes referred to by many names: Hobby Radio, Hobbycasting, Neighborhood Radio, Micro-Broadcasting, etc. It can emanate from private homes and businesses, schools elementary age through college and beyond, in fact from literally anywhere. There are thousands of fully legal Part 15 stations in the country. Their purpose could be for a radio experimenter learning about electronics, a hobbyist programming his own music, a community broadcaster serving a local neighborhood or small town, a school class learning about radio broadcasting, etc.

The difference between Pirate Radio and Part 15 Broadcasting is that Part 15 Broadcasting is fully authorized and legal when done within the F.C.C. Rules for this class of broadcasting. Part 15 Radio is available to broadcasters in both the AM and FM broadcast bands. To operate under Part 15 a broadcaster must meet the technical parameters spelled out in the F.C.C. Rules contained within Part 15 of their regulations (hence the name “Part 15 Broadcasting”).

Many F.C.C. Certified transmitters for both AM and FM Part 15 Broadcasting use are available for purchase. Clearly, the F.C.C. wouldn't bother certifying transmitters for this use if it wasn't legal! Even so, Part 15 Broadcasters are welcome to build and design their own transmitters as long as they meet the technical requirements spelled out in the rules.

Recently the F.C.C. has contacted many State and local law enforcement agencies, real estate organizations, attorneys, technical associations and others, seeking their assistance in halting illegal Pirate Radio Broadcasting. The Part 15 Broadcasting community is also against pirate radio activity but asks you to be aware of the difference between legal Part 15 Broadcasting, and illegal Pirate Radio Broadcasting. For more information you can visit these websites:

www.part15.us

<http://thealpb.com>

There you will find communities of Part 15 Broadcasters and links to much useful information about legal F.C.C. Authorized hobby radio broadcasting.