RADIO STATION CALL SIGNS

Radio station call signs are assigned by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Call signs for commercial broadcast radio stations in the United States:

Begin with **W** if the station is east of the Mississippi River.

Example: **WHSE**

Begin with **K** if the station is west of the Mississippi River.

Example: **KKOB**

Do not contain numbers.

Some stations use numbers with their call signs to indicate where you can find them on the radio dial (like 770 KOB), but the number is not part of their call sign.

Call signs for Amateur Radio stations in the United States:

Begin with **A**, **K**, **N**, or **W**.

Examples: **AA3BN**, **KC5OUR**, **N5PR**, **W6KJC**

Have a number in them that corresponds to the area of the country in which the operator lives (see map on page 43 of the merit badge pamphlet).

However:

When you move, you do not have to get a new call sign.

You can apply for a special call sign known as a vanity call sign containing any number.

So, you can not always tell where a Ham lives by the number in his call sign.

An Amateur Radio operator's call sign identifies both the operator's station and the operator.

A Ham may use his call sign wherever he goes in the United States.

A visiting Ham may operate someone else's station using their own call sign.

A guest may operate a Ham's station using the owner's call sign if the owner is there and acts as the control operator.