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New Transmitter Crackles On Air

BY EDWARD BENTZ.

Last week the far-flung emergency communication activities of Station X crackled more than ever before.

Assailing the radio fairways is a new FM transmitter, WJPJ, which went into operation Tuesday on 154.31 megacycles to shepherd the units of the Fire Department.

But it is just another step in a redevelopment program to boost Cincinnati's Division of Communications to top-drawer rank.

For several weeks one of the city's best-known and never-slumbering voices, WKDU, has been issuing its terse communiques on a new Frequency Modulation channel, 156.45 megacycles, operating simultaneously on its regular AM band of 1706 kilocycles.

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SEVERAL MONTHS hence a third FM station will take to the air from Eden Park's Station X. Its call letters will be WHNW and it will transmit on 37.90 megacycles to the receivers of the utility departments in Cincinnati—Salvage Corps, Highway Maintenance, Water Works Department and Public Utilities Department.

This divorcement of police, fire and utility radio from the Police Department's WKDU came about through a 1946 order of the Federal Communications Commission which reallocated frequency bands of emergency radio stations throughout the country. It meant buying just about all new equipment at a considerable investment.

Nobody around the old, red brick pumping station of the Water Works Department on Martin Street, wherein dwells Station X, really knows where the "X" came from.

Most likely explanation is that it originated with John B. Blandford, former Safety Director, who is believed to have swiped the name when it was a term applied to Central Station.

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STATION X, which put its first official call on the air June 16, 1932, though it had been in operation a year prior to that time, requires a staff of 62 to keep its round-the-clock operations intact.

Last year Station X, then meaning WKDU, broadcast a total of 297,715 calls; 267,000 for the Police Department and 11,000 for the Fire Department. There were also 19,715 additional calls for other city departments.

During the first year Station X was on the air, broadcasts averaged something like 8,000 a month, now its monthly average is close to 22,000 for police calls alone.

After it is at peak operating strength, eight land station transmitters and three Continuous Wave radiotelegraph transmitters will be available.

Housed in the historic, 200-foot Eden Park water tower, which was built around the year 1889 and remodeled last year by the communications department, are four new 250-watt transmitters, two each for police and fire. (One is only for standby purposes.)

These transmitting units, operated remotely from X's headquarters, have a range of 30 miles. They do business with 19 two-way mobile radio units of the Fire Department and 66 police force equipment. Two ambulances and one unit of the Task Force have two-way radio. Later this year, more two-way radio is to be added to the Water Works Department and the Park Police force.

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FOR 20 CENTS a call, Station X puts out calls for 24 Greater Cincinnati police stations without two-way radio.

Charles S. Jones, 1814 Berkley Ave., Bond Hill, a Signal Corps veteran of both World Wars, is Station X's Superintendent. A. W. Nightingale is Assistant Superintendent and James L. Hearn, Radio Supervisor,