

Zello for Chatham County CERT

What is Zello?

Zello (<https://zello.com/personal/>) is a free (with no ads) push-to-talk walkie-talkie application for cell phones that operates over weak cell signals or over wi-fi connections. One can set up 'channels' that allow group communications (one person talking, everyone else listening, like a Walkie-talkie).

Why should CERT use it?

Civilian CERT teams and rescue groups (like the Cajun Navy in the Louisiana hurricanes) use Zello to communicate during emergencies and disasters when traditional communications are either not working or are overcrowded. When information is needed by many people at the same time, cell phone calls or text messages can be difficult for large groups to receive.

How do I use Zello?

First, install the Zello application from the App Store or Google Play on your cell phone.

[iPhone user guide instructions](#)

[Android user guide instructions](#)


1. Sign up for an account. You will need a username, an email address, a password, and a phone number. If you like you can add a photo, a description of yourself, and a voice greeting but those are not required.
2. Add contacts. Zello can access your address book to connect your contacts, or you can add them manually by searching for username, email, or phone number.

How can I talk to someone?

1. In the main menu, select Contacts. While on that page, tap the name of the person you want to reach, and hold the microphone button to send a voice message (the button activates the walkie talkie, so hold it for a half second before speaking). Release the button when you are done talking.
2. The person you are trying to reach will hear your message if they are logged in and connected. If not, they will hear it once they can access the application.

How can I join the Chatham CERT group?

1. From the Main Menu, select **Channels**

2. Tap “+” at the bottom right corner.
3. Select **Scan QR code**
4. Focus the green scanner square directly on this  QR code to add the channel.
5. Once you join a channel, you will hear the talk immediately if the channel is active, much like a police scanner. You can also see a list of users and listen to messages that have been posted.



How can we practice?

Once learned, Zello is a simple app to use. However, there is a learning curve to understanding everything it can do for you. Chatham CERT plans to hold a quick monthly call-in session on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. This session will last just a few minutes but will give us a chance to practice using Zello before a real emergency.

What more can Zello do?

You can use Zello to talk to individuals, to send text messages, send photographs, or send your location to someone else. Much more information is available at the Zello website (www.zello.com).

Security and storage

While the Zello communications themselves are encrypted, everything that is said on a Zello channel is recorded to your phone’s Zello account. You can delete those recordings or messages individually as you like.