

NJ INVESTIGATORS



*Official
Member Handbook*

2006-2007

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About This Handbook

This Member Handbook is meant to be a guide for all of our members to follow when investigating a location. It is designed to inform members of all technical levels as to the procedures the group has collectively set forth regarding investigations.

Contained within this handbook, you will find detailed definitions of common terms, specific procedures to follow during each step of an investigation, and suggestions on what to bring with you.

General Contact Information

- **Rich Dunajewski**
 - **Position:** Founder
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 - **Town:** Edison
- **Jason Scriffiano**
 - **Position:** Co-Founder
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- **Investigation Manager**
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GMRS Radio Plan

We encourage the use of two-way radios for most communications between group members. We have chosen to use GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) frequencies and radios due to the availability of the radios at a very cheap price. A member with a higher than average interest in radio may want to consider buying professional UHF radios.

Our GMRS channel plan is as follows:

- **NJI-1 Primary**
 - **GMRS Channel:** 18
 - **Privacy Code:** 19
 - **Frequency:** 462.625 MHz (Professional Radios)
 - **CTCSS Tone:** 127.3 Hz (Professional Radios)
- **NJI-2 Secondary**
 - **GMRS Channel:** 19
 - **Privacy Code:** 19
 - **Frequency:** 462.650 MHz (Professional Radios)
 - **CTCSS Tone:** 127.3 Hz (Professional Radios)
- **NJI-3 Travel**
 - **GMRS Channel:** 20
 - **Privacy Code:** 22
 - **Frequency:** 462.676 MHz (Professional Radios)
 - **CTCSS Tone:** 141.3 Hz (Professional Radios)
- **NJI-4 Repeater (*Repeater Capable Radios Only*)**
 - **Frequencies:** 467.625 MHz TX, 462.625 MHz RX
 - **CTCSS Tone:** 192.8 Hz

What To Bring

You should bring the following items:

- Water
 - You should bring your own supply of bottled water. Drinks probably won't be provided and it will be rare that we stop for drinks.
- Snack
 - A light snack is a good idea to have on hand since we will probably be investigating over a long period of time.
- Flashlight
 - What better tool to have at night or in an otherwise dark situation than a flashlight? We even have one we can recommend to you.
- Cell Phone
 - A cell phone can prove invaluable should someone get lost or hurt. Backup phones from different providers are essential!
- Valid Identification
 - It is absolutely imperative that all members carry valid ID. For many of us our ID is a driver's license. Other acceptable forms of ID include a state ID card, student ID card, or even a passport. The ID must have your photo on it.
- Extra Batteries
 - Always bring extra batteries for items such as your flashlight, camera, radio, and your cell phone if possible.
- THIS Member Handbook
 - This handbook contains information that is useful both to new and experienced members. It is frequently updated on the website and available for download and printing.

Optional items which may be of great use to you:

- Two-Way Radio
 - A great short-range way to communicate especially if we split up. Cell phones are great in an emergency but radios are best for frequently checking in and reporting where a cell phone is just too involved. Must be capable of GMRS operation. (**More Information:** <http://www.njinvestigators.org/gmrs>)
- GPS Receiver
 - GPS Devices tell you exactly where you are on Earth. They have an intuitive and interactive map environment which ensures you'll never get lost! Please only bring a handheld portable unit, not one for the car.
- Film Camera
 - Since many of us use digital cameras, anyone with a film camera would be of great use to the group. Film captures some things that digital does not, and vice versa.
- Digital Camera
 - Digital cameras are relative inexpensive these days and offer many shots at great quality. This is our most essential tool for documenting our investigations.
- Video Camera
 - Video cameras are a valuable asset when we're documenting a case when we need to have high quality video. In recent years the size of video cameras has decreased greatly. We need video cameras which have a night vision mode, such as Sony's NightShot feature.
- Audio Recorder
 - Due to their small size, digital audio recorders are perfect for capturing subtle sounds which may not be recorded on video cameras or even heard by investigators at the time. These are also helpful when searching for EVPs.
- EMF Detector
 - EMF detectors are used to detect changes in the electromagnetic field at a location. They are often used in paranormal investigations but they can also be used to detect anomalies in the natural geography of a location or false positives generated by manmade equipment.

What Not To Bring

There are plenty of things you should not bring. Use common sense. Should we be questioned by police, anything you may be carrying with you can be interpreted as a weapon or burglary tool. Here are some examples:

- Knives
- Pocket Tools
- Fireworks
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Excessive Cash

You also should not bring anything highly valuable. We cannot be held responsible for things which are lost or stolen. If you fear something will be lost or stolen, just don't bring it.

Dress Code

The dress code for NJ Investigators is very simple. We want to maintain a professional look, but we don't want to impose a lot of restrictions. To put it simply, wear something comfortable but with a professional edge to it. Jeans are fine, as are t-shirts. Items such as sweatpants, flip-flops, or excessively baggy clothes aren't allowed. This is more of a safety rule than anything else.

Transportation

It is the responsibility of every member to find transportation to the pre-investigation meeting place. We are not going to pick you up from your house. We will try to get as many people into a car as legally possible to minimize the number of vehicles. Once we meet up and verify everyone is present, we will get into the assigned cars and travel to the destination. You **MUST** meet up with the group before you'll be allowed to join the investigation. We can't have people showing up on their own accord.

Investigation Length

Investigations can vary in length. Some may last an hour, and some may last several hours throughout the night. The Events Calendar will list the expected length of the trip. Please plan accordingly as we cannot cut the trip short for just one or two members.

Code of Conduct

1. Follow directions given by the founders or the next in charge
2. Maintain a professional attitude at all times
3. Never go off alone – always have at least one other member with you
4. Avoid unnecessary noise such as screaming
5. NO:
 - a. Trespassing
 - b. Vandalism
 - c. Theft
 - d. Alcohol
 - e. Drugs
 - f. Weapons

Group Hierarchy

To maintain order within the group, we have a simple but important hierarchy. The Founder has the ultimate say in any decision concerning the group. He is responsible for ensuring the safety of the members and must be in full control.

The Co-Founders are next in charge. If the Founder can't be contacted for some reason, it will be up to the Co-Founders to make the choices until Rich can be contacted.

The following is a list of member classes with their respective responsibilities and authorities granted to them.

- **Founders (including Co-Founders)**
 - **Responsibilities**
 - Ensure that the members are following the rules and no laws are broken which may compromise the group.

- Ensure that investigation procedures are followed.
 - Ensure that the safety of the members is not at risk.
 - **Authority**
 - Founders have the final say in all decisions.
 - May deny membership to any individual for any reason.
 - May call local police if a member breaks a law, such as theft or vandalism.
 - May call 911 in emergencies. If a founder cannot be contacted quickly, anyone may call for help. An effort must be made to inform a founder to eliminate confusion and multiple calls.
 - May change the rules at any time in the best interest of the group.
- **Senior Investigators**
 - **Responsibilities**
 - Oversee regular members and probationary members during an investigation.
 - Report any important information to a founder or the other members.
 - Be aware of safety concerns as well as potential liabilities.
 - **Authority**
 - May temporarily take the place of a founder when one cannot be reached.
 - Has direct supervision over regular members and probationary members at all times.
 - May report members which cause trouble or break rules, laws, etc. to the founders.
 - Involved in the decision-making process when revising rules, accepting or rejecting member applications, and other considerations.
- **Regular Investigators**
 - **Responsibilities**
 - Use equipment to investigate locations according to the designated plan for each location.
 - Assist probationary members in their training and acclimatization with the functions of the group.
 - **Authority**
 - May report any important information to a senior investigator or a founder at any time.
 - May make recommendations for rule revisions or changes in protocol.
- **Investigation Manager**
 - **Responsibilities**
 - Secures permission from property owners when seeking to perform an investigation.
 - Notifies police and/or security of our presence at a location.
 - Handles requests from individuals who want us to investigate a location.
 - Researches information from libraries as well as the Internet regarding locations and their histories.
 - **Authority**
 - May suggest locations to be investigated.
 - May assist in the revisions of rules and procedures.

If You Get Lost

Should you get separated from the rest of the group you can always call the Founder, Rich. His cell phone number will be given out when we meet up prior to arriving at the destination. You should only call him in an emergency situation. Cell phone numbers for both Rich and Jason can be found in the Field Guide that all members should carry with them.

If you have a GMRS two-way radio, Rich and other members of the group should be on Channel 18 (462.625 MHz) with Privacy Code 19 (CTCSS Tone 127.3 Hz). Be sure that you're on the correct channel before we leave the meeting place.

If you don't have access to a cell phone or two-way radio, you shouldn't venture too far from where you are. By trying to find your way back to the group you can easily get more lost or wander into an area that we wouldn't know to look in. If we're in a wooded area or field at night, you have a good chance of waving your flashlight. Another member may be able to spot your light and reunite you with the group.

Requirements of a Member

First and foremost all members must follow the rules. You must also follow any directions given by the Founder or Co-Founders. Any decisions we make have safety in mind. We're not trying to take the fun out of the trip.

Members are expected to contribute some item to the group to aid in the investigations. We're a non-profit group, so we don't have an income that goes toward purchasing equipment. If you can provide a vehicle, camera, GPS unit, flashlights, etc. for members to use, you're in good standing. Anything you let us borrow will be returned at the end of the investigation. It's not productive to just go on trips with us and use everyone else's equipment.

Disclaimer

Preamble

NJ Investigators, hereafter referred to as "the group," encompasses this website, its founders, its members, and any works published under that title.

Weird NJ

Although many members are fans of the successful magazine publication Weird NJ, the group is not affiliated in any way with Weird NJ, its website, or its creators. No part of this website is copied, in whole or in part, from the Weird NJ publications without proper citations.

Trespassing

The group does not condone the act of trespassing on any property -- public or private. This includes parks which have a designated closing time, even though access is unrestricted during open hours. The group does not trespass on any property for which it does not have prior permission to investigate. The group often works directly with local police departments to secure proper permission to access properties. The group does not, under any circumstances, enter abandoned structures. This is to ensure the safety of the group's members.

Vandalism

The group does not vandalize property under any circumstances. Members who are found to violate this rule will be reported to local police and/or be denied membership in the group, depending on the severity of the violation. The group is not responsible for the actions of individuals, whether they are members or not. The group does not condone any form of vandalism, including but not limited to: spray painting, carving, breaking windows, or otherwise destroying property.

Legal Jurisdiction

Members as well as visitors to the website are subject to local, state, or even federal laws when at a location. The group maintains that anyone who visits a location should follow these laws strictly and with good judgment. The group does not suggest any law should be broken. The group will not be held responsible for the actions of any member or visitor which may result in fines, arrest, et cetera.

Injuries

The group will not be held responsible under any circumstances for any injuries incurred while on a group or private trip. The group is hereby indemnified against any claims of personal injury from members or visitors. Safety is your own responsibility and we cannot be held accountable for your own actions. We do, however, try to avoid hazardous situations when possible.

Notice to Change

This disclaimer is subject to change at any time. The group founder will do his best to notify of changes through the "News" section of the website as well as via the Member Newsletter. However, it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure they are abiding by this disclaimer in its most current version. Any questions about this disclaimer should be directed at the founder via the "Contact Us" section. Please stay informed!

NJ Investigators Charter

- I. **Name:** The name of this organization shall be "The NJ Investigators" (or "NJI").
- II. **Statement of Purpose:** The purpose of this organization shall be to:
 - a. Research and document claims of paranormal activity, historic locations, and local legends in the State of New Jersey and its surrounding states.
 - b. Conduct field investigations of the aforementioned claims using all available methods and technologies.
 - c. Educate the group's members as well as non-members about our mission through various promotional methods.
 - d. Provide impartial and unbiased conclusions for each and every case.
 - e. Maintain a professional appearance and a friendly attitude at all times.
 - f. Share findings with affiliated organizations as well as the general public.
- III. **Membership:** Any individual may join NJI who:
 - a. Is of full legal age (18 years old)
 - b. Has a keen or profound interest in the subjects which NJI will investigate.
 - c. Is able to abide by the Code of Conduct and Investigation Procedures.
 - d. Will respect the other members, including superiors and subordinates.
 - e. Is willing to devote satisfactory amounts of time to the group.
 - f. Has something to contribute to the group, such as materials, equipment, knowledge, technical abilities, or to take on additional positions and responsibilities.
- IV. **Events and Meetings:** NJI intends to sponsor a myriad of events including:
 - a. Field Investigations
 - b. Regular Meetings (Monthly or Bi-weekly)
 - c. New Member Training Sessions
 - d. Recreational (Non-investigative) Trips
 - e. Post-investigation Dining (Diners, Restaurants)

- V. **Group Positions:** NJI shall create the following member positions within the group:
- Founder:** Permanent
 - Co-Founders:** Permanent
 - Investigation Manager:** Appointed by Founder/Co-Founders
 - Senior Investigators:** Promoted from Regular Investigator
 - Regular Investigators:** By member vote
 - Probationary Members:** Temporary (Initial position for all new members)
- VI. **Minimum Requirements to End Probationary Status:**
- Minimum of 3 continuous months as a Probationary Member.
 - Minimum of 6 hours of formal training with equipment and techniques.
 - Participation in 3 investigations of more than 2 hours each.
 - A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote among all existing group members in your favor.

Glossary

Apparition:

A ghostly figure in any visual form.

Digital Camera:

Digital cameras use a CMOS or CCD sensor to capture images and save them to either an internal non-volatile flash memory or to an external storage medium. Digital cameras allow investigators to take many more photos than film cameras without the expense of film. Digital photos can also be reviewed immediately on-scene without developing time and cost.

Digital Video Camera (DV):

Video cameras capture full motion onto either a digital tape medium, hard drive, or external flash memory.

Ectoplasm:

An ethereal substance or mist associated with spirit manifestations.

Electromagnetic Field (EMF):

A field of force associated with an electromagnetic charge in motion. Electromagnetic energy has both electric and magnetic components.

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP):

The recording of voice on audio tape with no explainable or physical source of origin. EVPs are usually discovered when a recording is played back, and not heard at the time of recording.

Elementals:

Angry spirits which are said to inhabit natural settings such as forests. Also known as "Earth Spirits."

EMF Detector:

A device which detects the strength of an electromagnetic field. The unit of measure for EMF Detectors is in *milligauss*.

General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS):

A two-way radio service in the UHF band used for short-range communications. An FCC license is required to use GMRS frequencies. There is a maximum output of 50 watts.

Ghost:

A generic term referring to a form of apparition or supernatural entity which is typically the visual appearance of a deceased person.

Global Positioning System (GPS):

A satellite navigation system which accurately determines your location on Earth by using a network of orbiting satellites. GPS receivers are useful when trying to pinpoint remote locations or while driving to an investigation.

Haunting:

Recurring ghostly phenomena that returns to a location where no one is physically present. Ghosts generally haunt places rather than people.

Infrared (IR):

An electromagnetic wavelength longer than that of visible light, but shorter than that of radio waves. Night Vision cameras and scopes can detect infrared light which is invisible to the human eye. IR illumination is used to see objects in the dark area without turning on visible light sources.

Intelligent Haunting:

A haunting in which a ghost interacts with a living person or is otherwise aware of the person's presence.

Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS):

A two-way radio service in the VHF band used for short-range communications. No license is required to use MURS frequencies. There is a maximum output of 2 watts.

Orb:

A photographed anomaly that theoretically represents the spirit of a deceased person. Orbs appear as a ball of light in photos or video but are usually not seen at the time of recording. NJI dismisses about 99% of all orbs as dust, weather, or insect activity.

Paranormal:

Any event or occurrence which cannot be explained by current scientific knowledge.

Poltergeist:

German word for "noisy ghost;" a ghost which causes unexplained sounds, often banging objects, throwing objects, and other mischievous or malevolent behavior.

Residual Haunting:

A term applied to a haunting in which the ghost will go about the same routines often re-enacting historical events or a tragedy.

Vortex:

An anomaly that appears as a funnel or rope-like image in photos. Vortices are thought to represent ghosts, collections of orbs, or time-space wormholes.

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