

Well there are 3 different ways that latitude and longitude can be expressed on your Garmin GPS receiver. For instance the 1st choice you have would be called, um decimal degrees. The 2nd choice would be called degrees minutes, and the 3rd choice would be called degrees minutes seconds. There's a couple of different options here. Let's ask Aaron why, um those options exist and what might be some good opportunities to move back and forth between those.

Well at least decimal degrees is often used, and that's the first one, is often used by computers and computer programs because it's much easier for those computer programs to deal with just one specific number. The degrees decimal minutes one is used by aircraft in flight so if you're ever needing to contact somebody in a helicopter or in an airplane from the ground they're gonna be looking for your information in that format. The 3rd one is degrees, minutes, seconds and that's the standard for firefighters on the ground and I think is the one that's most commonly used. The issue I have with them, and the 3 different types is that confusing degrees decimal minutes and degrees minutes seconds when you're entering in GPS coordinates can cause one of those user errors that I talked about a little bit earlier and could throw your coordinates off by as much as a third of a mile. So understanding the difference between degrees decimal minutes and degrees minutes seconds I think is a critical error that you need to watch out for.

That's good information, Aaron. Always good to know what the information that you're working with demands in terms of the format that it needs to be presented in. So if you're starting out on a job and you're not really sure what the what the standard for reporting is, ask who you're working for or consult with, with someone else who's been doing that job for a while and find out if the setting that you're looking for is the degrees minutes seconds, degrees minutes, or decimal degrees. Set your receiver accordingly and you'll be in good shape.

It's just a little confusing, but making sure to even announcing which format that you're using can sometimes relieve some of those communication errors that can cause problems.

That's good advice.