



# Tornado Awareness Week 2011

## An ARES/RACES Communications Drill

(This is Rev 0c)

1. **Background:** The week of April 11-15 is "Severe Weather and Tornado Awareness Week" in Wisconsin:
  - a. 21 tornados occur in Wisconsin each year on average.
  - b. 46 tornados struck Wisconsin in 2010 injuring 22 people and causing nearly \$30 million in damages.
  - c. April to August is peak tornado season. Tornados have occurred in every month of the year except February.
  - d. 4 to 9pm is the peak timeframe for a tornado to occur. Tornados have occurred at all hours day and night.
  - e. Preparedness and early warning are the best defenses against tornados.
2. **Awareness:** Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service will conduct several activities Severe Weather and Tornado Awareness Week to increase awareness:
  - a. Radio and television campaigns throughout the state.
  - b. A partnership with Walgreens to sell weather radios at reduced cost.
  - c. A statewide tornado drill on Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 2pm
3. **WI ARES/RACES:** ARES/RACES is asked to:
  - a. Provide volunteers at several Walgreens stores to help people program the appropriate SAME codes in the weather radios they buy or already own. More details on this will be provided in the next few days.
  - b. Participate in a communications drill as part of the tornado drill on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Details are in this fact sheet.
4. **Purpose:** This drill simulates an ARES/RACES activation resulting from one or more tornados in your area. The drill tests the readiness of ARES/RACES groups to activate on short notice for a severe weather emergency.
5. **Goals:**
  - a. Test the effectiveness of the local and statewide ARES/RACES communications structure.
  - b. Test the effectiveness of local and district ARES/RACES activation plans.
  - c. Test the ability of local ARES/RACES groups to communicate with SEC and CRO.
  - d. Encourage each county and district to poll the number of members available at the time of the drill and pass that information to the SEC and CRO.
6. **Two Ways To Play (choose one):** When the warning sirens sound:
  - a. Activate local VHF and/or UHF nets and take check ins. Announce "This is a drill" at the start, during, and at the end of the net.
    - i. Check in all appropriately licensed ham radio operators.
    - ii. Close the net 30 minutes to an hour after activation.
    - iii. Using a standard message format, send a message to the SEC and CRO reporting the number of stations checked in.
  - b. Poll the members of your ARES/RACES group:
    - i. At an unannounced time chosen by the EC, telephone each team member at the number they have provided to reach them. Announce "This is a drill".
    - ii. Ask if they would be available for assignment if the team were being called up.
    - iii. Using a standard message format, send a message to the SEC and CRO reporting the number of team members called, the number of members who reported as available, and the number of members who reported as unavailable.
  - c. If a DEC is available, send messages to the DEC for forwarding to the SEC and CRO. If A DEC is NOT available, send messages directly to the SEC and CRO by the best available means.
  - d. The Badger Emergency Net will conduct a special session on 3985 KHz (+ or - QRM) to take drill messages and pass them to WC9AAG or a station participating in SIMCOMM-11.
7. **Sample Messages.** Here are some message examples for reporting local activities to the SEC and CRO.

[Sample drill messages with changeable parts underlined](#)

Sample #1 - NTS format basic message for SEC to play in part A:

NR   2   TEST R  K9LGU   13  FORT ATKINSON  1340  APRIL 14



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GARY SORENSEN W9ULK  
SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

TEST MESSAGE X JEFFERSON COUNTY  
NET ACTIVATED FOR 32 MINUTES  
WITH SEVEN STATIONS

DAN  
KC9IKI  
EC JEFFERSON COUNTY

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Sample #2 – part A – with DEC available

NR 3 TEST R K9LGU 18 FORT ATKINSON 1340 APRIL 14

JON GILMORE KB9RHZ  
SOUTHEAST DEC

TEST MESSAGE X JEFFERSON COUNTY  
NET ACTIVATED FOR 32 MINUTES  
WITH 7 STATIONS X PLEASE  
FORWARD TO SEC

DAN  
KC9IKI  
EC JEFFERSON COUNTY

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Sample #3 – Part A with additional details

NR 4 TEST R K9LGU 19 FORT ATKINSON 1340 APRIL 14

SKIP SHARPE  
CHIEF RADIO OFFICER

TEST MESSAGE X JEFFERSON COUNTY  
NET ACTIVATED FROM EOC FOR  
32 MINUTES WITH SEVEN STATIONS  
ALL ON EMERGENCY POWER

DAN  
KC9IKI



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### EC JEFFERSON COUNTY

Sample #4 - *basic message to play in part B* -

NR 5 TEST R K9LGU 20 FORT ATKINSON 1940 APRIL 14

GARY SORENSEN W9ULK  
SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

TEST MESSAGE X JEFFERSON COUNTY  
ACTIVATION DRILL AT 1830L X  
18 CONTACTS X 9 AVAILABLE  
6 UNAVAILABLE 3 NO RESPONSE

DAN  
KC9IKI  
EC JEFFERSON COUNTY

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Sample #5 - *To play in part B with more details* -

NR 5 TEST R K9LGU 28 FORT ATKINSON 1940 APRIL 14

SKIP SHARPE  
CHIEF RADIO OFFICER

TEST MESSAGE X JEFFERSON COUNTY  
ACTIVATION DRILL AT 1830L X  
22 CONTACTS X 5 AVAILABLE  
FOR SHORT TERM DEPLOYMENT 6  
FOR LONG TERM 6 UNAVAILABLE  
5 NO RESPONSE

DAN  
KC9IKI  
EC JEFFERSON COUNTY



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8. **This guidance is basic and is purposefully vague.** Each county should use the communications plan and all available resources.
9. **And remember:** Have fun and be creative!

Skip Sharpe, W9REL

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