



# The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



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## WISCONSIN SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR, CHIEF RACES RADIO OFFICER AND EDITOR:

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The WEC Newsletter is sent monthly to all American Radio Relay League Emergency Coordinators in the State of Wisconsin. It intended to provide a forum for ECs to share ideas concerning the organization and training of their respective groups, and as a source of news concerning ARES and RACES activities in the state.

Comments, suggestions and articles (finished or in rough form) are solicited from the readers.

This newsletter and other important documents are posted on the Wisconsin ARES/RACES web page at:

<http://www.execpc.com/~skaplan>

in PDF format, shortly after each issue is published.

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## Annual EC Conference A Resounding Success

The Second Annual ARES/RACES/Emergency Coordinator/Radio Officer Conference was held Saturday, 2 December, with 72 attendees! What a terrific turnout! Here is what could be read from the sign in sheets:

- |           |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| 1. WB9ADB | 14. WD9JIB | 27. KG9NH  |
| 2. N9ASA  | 15. KB9JQV | 28. KB9NUM |
| 3. KB9BTB | 16. N9JUJ  | 29. N9NTB  |
| 4. W9CWD  | 17. K9JYX  | 30. WB9OKQ |
| 5. WA2DEU | 18. KB9KBK | 31. N9OXO  |
| 6. KB9ENO | 19. WA9KCU | 32. N9PBY  |
| 7. WD9FR  | 20. KA9KLZ | 33. KB9QWC |
| 8. N9FYP  | 21. KB0LGB | 34. KG9RA  |
| 9. N9HR   | 22. K9LGU  | 35. K9REO  |
| 10. W9IBL | 23. N9LLS  | 36. KB9RHZ |
| 11. KC9IK | 24. KG9MK  | 37. KB9ROB |
| 12. W9IXG | 25. KB9MRU | 38. WB9RQR |
| 13. K9IZV | 26. KG9NG  | 39. N9RTJ  |

- |            |            |                      |
|------------|------------|----------------------|
| 40. KA9RZL | 51. KB9UOL | 62. N9XRU            |
| 41. KB9SDF | 52. N9UPZ  | 63. N9XVG            |
| 42. N9SFG  | 53. N9UUR  | 64. N0XXL            |
| 43. KB9SHK | 54. N9VE   | 65. AD9X             |
| 44. K9SJ   | 55. N9VSV  | 66. N9YNU            |
| 45. WA9SZH | 56. KC1W   | 67. N9ZET            |
| 46. KB9SZP | 57. N9WBR  | 68. W0ZUP            |
| 47. KB9TPT | 58. W9WCF  | 69. N9ZXP            |
| 48. N9TUJ  | 59. N9WJV  | 70. K9ZZZ            |
| 49. N9UDN  | 60. WB9WRW | 71. Beasley, William |
| 50. KB9UGD | 61. N9WSZ  | 72. Wohlferd, Alan   |

The festivities began in the auditorium with a welcome by WB9RQR, followed by comments from Alan Wohlferd (WEM Communications and Warning Officer), the WEM official responsible for our state RACES program. Then Don Michalski (W9IXG, ARRL Section Manager) previewed the new ARRL Continuing Education Program on Emergency Communications ("EmComm", see separate article in this issue). Jim Lackore (AD9X, ARRL Section Government Liaison), followed with a discussion of local and state laws covering the use of mobile cell phones and other communications devices, which may have an impact on Amateur Radio mobile communications. After a break, Abe Galonski (KC1W, EC for Ozaukee County), profiled his group – especially their positive, intimate relationship with Emergency Management. The participants then moved to the EOC for a box lunch, tours of the State Hamshack by Mack Brophy (N9NTB) and tours of the Milwaukee Mobile Communications Van hosted by Milwaukee EC Jeananne Bargholz (N9VSV) in the parking lot. After lunch, Ray Meyer (N9PBY) spoke on the Wisconsin Packet Network. The day was topped off by a bona fide tabletop exercise, designed and facilitated by Jack Morrison (N9SFG), Ozaukee County's AEC for Training and Captain of the county's 42-foot Rescue Boat. The scenario involved regional wildfires that required ECs to coordinate inter-county response and mutual aid. The exercise definitely caused all present to think about emergencies that cross county borders, and that require multi-unit response. The general feeling was that it was an excellent, challenging experience, well worth the time expended. The conference began at 10:00 a.m. and ended promptly at 3:00 p.m. If you missed it this year, plan on attending in 2001!

## Letter of Thanks from NWS

By Tom Kucharski, KA9EWJ, EC – National Weather Service Forecast Office, Milwaukee

Below is a letter of thanks from Rusty Kapela, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Milwaukee/Sullivan Weather Forecast Office (WFO MKX.) It turns out that 2000 was the heaviest year in a while for Amateur Radio support of MKX and as indicated in the letter, the staff at WFO MKX surely appreciates our efforts. Please feel free to circulate copies of this letter to your local groups. It is definitely something we all should be proud of.

In addition to the gratitude that WFO MKX expresses, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to those who assisted in our efforts in support of WFO MKX for the 2000 calendar year. There are many exciting things coming down the line in the future. If your group is not already involved, I urge you to please contact me regarding the details of the support program at WFO MKX and how your group can assist in those efforts. Thanks again for your service and best wishes for the holiday season.

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November 3, 2000

Tom Kucharski, KA9EWJ  
Emergency Coordinator  
National Weather Service, Milwaukee/Sullivan, WI

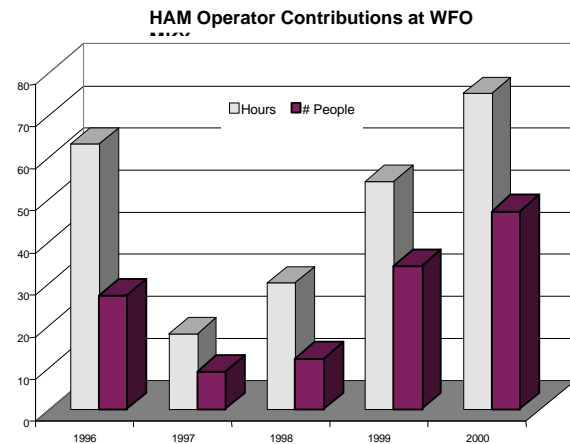
Dear Tom:

On behalf on the entire National Weather Service (NWS) staff here at the Milwaukee/Sullivan Weather Forecast Office (WFO MKX), I want to express my great appreciation and admiration for the volunteer work you and your colleagues performed for our severe weather program during the year 2000. Without the dedication and efforts of amateur radio operators (Hams) such as yourself, and other emergency response organizations, the quality of MKX's warning and verification program would suffer greatly. Through our partnership we've been able to minimize the loss of life and property across south-central and southeast Wisconsin.

As you know, the NWS has been tasked by the people of this country to issue short-fuse, severe weather warnings for tornadoes, damaging winds and large hail, and flash floods. Our WSR-88D Doppler radar system and other advanced technologies enable us to detect internal thunderstorm characteristics that suggest severe weather is imminent, or is already occurring. However, these internal characteristics don't guarantee that severe weather will, or has occurred. In addition, due to the Earth's curvature, the height of the lowest radar beam above ground level increases with distance from the radar site. In general, Doppler radar cannot detect what is happening below cloud base beyond 15 miles from our radar site.

These limitations mean that cloud-base and ground-truth reports are critically needed from severe weather spotters. Due to direct 2-way radio communications among your membership, and network controllers who report to the MKX office during severe weather episodes, your reports are timely and very useful. Overall, HAM reports constitute about 35 to 40% of all severe weather reports that are relayed to the Milwaukee-Sullivan office.

The 2000 severe weather season was extremely active, and the volunteer forecast-office, operator hours increased dramatically compared to previous years. During the year 2000, 47 hams reported to the MKX Office, donating 75 hours.



The bar graph shows the number of forecast-office operators who reported to MKX, and their hours worked the past few years. What the bar graph does not show is the number of volunteer hours worked by other Hams who were at home, on the road, or at pre-determined locations during severe weather episodes. In other conversations, you estimated that roughly 200 Amateur Radio operators were "on duty" during each weather event for about 2.5 hours. There were 21 weather events this year in our County Warning Area. Consequently, Amateur Radio Operators probably contributed  $200 \times 2.5 \times 21$ , or 10,500 hours! This is an incredible number of hours in the spirit of public safety!

I want to mention that HAM contributions dates back to 1968, when this office was located at Milwaukee Mitchell Field. Hams have provided continuous, invaluable help, though the move to our current location in October of 1989, the addition of south-central Wisconsin to our County Warning Area, and up to, and including, the busy severe weather season of 2000. In addition to radar and satellite trends, the real-time severe weather reports, or lack of reports, from the Hams are a key component in our staff's decision-making process. HAM reports have a direct impact on whether or not our staff issues a short-fuse warning.

After a severe weather episode ends, wrap-up procedures are initiated. The MKX staff gathers copies of all watches, warnings, follow-up statements, and local storm

reports, such as those from the HAM community. Newspaper clippings are collected as well as additional reports from Emergency Managers (EM), the law enforcement community, post offices, and other volunteer severe weather spotters. All of this information is then translated into a cohesive, and nationally published report entitled **StormData**, which is broken down by sub-regions in each state. Below is a fictitious example of what a typical StormData report may look like:

**Jeferson County 2 N Milford 12 1505CST 0 1 200K  
100K Thunderstorm Wind (M65)**

Thunderstorm winds downed numerous large trees, leveled a barn, and blew over a fuel storage tank just north of Milford, based on Emergency Manager reports. An Amateur Radio operator north of Milford measured a peak wind gust of 65 knots (75 mph), and a rainfall amount of 2.50 inches between 1300 and 1500CST which resulted in local flooding of farm fields and small streams. One person was injured when broken tree branch fell on them. There were no fatalities. Property damage amounted to \$200,000 and crop damage was about \$100,000.

This **StormData** publication is used nationwide by Emergency Managers for assessing weather hazards and threats at the county or local level, by insurance companies for establishing premium rates related to weather hazards, by university and laboratory researchers, by climatologists, and a host of others. As you can see, Amateur Radio contributions are critically needed for a variety of reasons. Once again, thank you very much, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the future.

Sincerely, (/s/) Anton F. Kapela  
Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
cc: W/CR1x4 - J. Sullivan  
cc: EM Directors - SC & SE WI  
cc: Newspapers - SC & SE WI

## Two New ECs

Kenneth Meyer, K9KJM, became EC of Door County on 13 November, which completes all positions in the East Central District. Moreover, he has been busy as a bee and has 25 registered members in his group already! Welcome also Walter Webber, N9FYP, new EC for Juneau County, effective 18 November. That puts the Central District in the complete category as well. The tab: all EC positions are filled in the East Central, Central, South Central and South East Districts. Clearly, Stan will miss his goal of filling every EC position in the state by 1Jan2001. Nevertheless, we continue to march on at a steady pace. Only a dozen counties of the 72 lack an EC. They are:

Northwest: Barron, Rush.  
West Central: Chippewa, Pepin, Buffalo.  
Southwest: Vernon.  
North Central: Iron, Lincoln.

Northeast: Florence, Langlade, Oconto,  
Menomonee.

Know of a capable ham in any of these counties who might be interested in becoming an EC? Talk to them, and inform Stan. Are you bordering one of these counties? Would you be willing to cover it too? Talk to Stan. Remember that an EC must be appointed in a county before any ham in that county can be a member of ARES or RACES (unless they join a neighboring county's group).

So, welcome to our newest ECs! Here is their data, which will appear in the next issue of the EC Roster:

DOOR: Kenneth Meyer, K9KJM  
5408 County Road TT  
Sturgeon Bay 54235  
H: 920-743-4440

JUNEAU: Walter Webber, N9FYP  
125 Highway 12 W  
Camp Douglas 54618  
H: 608-427-6501 M: 608-572-0773  
wfwebber@mwt.net

## Nets, Nets, Nets

By Dennis Rybicke, K9LGU  
ARRL Section Traffic Manager

[Here is Denny's latest STM Report. We thank him for permission to reprint it here.]

If you have read the data on nets in Stan's EC Bulletin, you have learned a bundle. If not, I recommend it highly (<http://www.execpc.com/~skaplan>). For example, the reprint from N8UT points out that nets come in various sizes, shapes, and functions. He begins by defining a "declared" net as any net that begins with a statement from an operator that a net is being started for a particular purpose, and that someone is assuming duties as Net Control Station, (NCS). You will hear that statement in the preamble of every one of our section nets.

Since declared nets can take many different formats and styles, N8UT delineates the differences like this.

OPEN NET FORMAT: This type of declared net can be nearly invisible. A group has declared a net active, but not much is happening. The repeater or frequency is being used normally. The net is transparent and running in the background. A typical use for this type net is during the early stages of weather watches. Operators are occasionally reporting some weather condition to an informal NCS. Other than that, the rag chewing is proceeding normally.

DIRECTED NET FORMAT: There are two basic types of directed nets: Formal and Informal. Informal Directed Nets are your normal Tuesday night

club net, Elmer's Net, CW practice net, ARES teaching net, Public Service Events, etc. Formal Directed Nets include activation of ARES/RACES personnel for Fire Nets, Skywarn, earthquake, or other Emergency Activation. In either case, the NCS declares the net to be active and actively controls the frequency. A specific topic, conditions, and/or set of instructions for check-in may be given. Normal usage of the frequency is stopped. This is the case with regular section nets. Stations are given instructions on how to pass traffic and it is done as efficiently as possible.

Net Control Stations can quickly become overwhelmed during emergencies. As the scope of an operation grows, the main (Command) NCS may activate one or more supporting sub-nets. This reduces the traffic flow to, and maintains the efficiency of, the main net. These sub-nets operate independently of the main net and have their own NCS. If we need a sub-net with a section net, it would be to handle welfare traffic, collect data, etc.

The same pattern is used on a section level as part of the National Traffic System. Stations across the state do not have to check every other state's nets to pass traffic. Instead, it is sent from state to state through AREA nets and is exchanged between area nets by the TCC (Trans Continental Corps). The operative word in the NTS is "system." That is what allows traffic to flow across the country and that is what keeps nets functioning smoothly. When you check in with a section net -- or any net -- remember that you are a small part of a big system, and a very important part, too, because, without the check-ins, a net isn't.

## EmComm: A New ARRL Emergency Training Package

This new program was announced by our Section Manager, Don Michalski (W9IXG) at the EC Conference in Madison, 4 December (see p. 1). Now, before you rush around trying to sign up for this, realize that, as of this writing (11Dec), it is not ready for you to do so. Nevertheless, there was a lot of discussion concerning the program at the EC Conference, and several questions were put to Don that he could not answer then. However, he contacted Dan Miller (K3UFG) at ARRL HQ and Dan responded to his questions. Here are Don's questions followed by Dan's abridged and edited responses.

*DON: Will the ARRL make EmComm mandatory for ECs?* **DAN:** It will never be mandatory. It is in-

tended solely as a volunteer training course offering a basic level of knowledge.

*DON: Who will teach the classroom [as opposed to Base] courses? Will ECs become instructors after certification?* **DAN:** Volunteers who meet the necessary criteria – ECs, SECs and DECAs would be perfect instructors and mentors.

*DON: Where will these classes be located? Can an EC request a class be held in their county?* **DAN:** They will be located wherever the instructors and students determine. If you wish a class in your area, simply find eligible instructors nearby and put it together.

*DON: The window of opportunity for Level One is 8 weeks. What happens after that? Will the course be open on a continuing basis?* [EDITOR'S NOTE: Clearly, Don is referring to the Internet-based course here.] **DAN:** The first online course will allow students 8 weeks for completion. At that point, we will re-evaluate and update the course, opening it again four weeks later. How often it is offered will depend on demand.

*DON: Several ECs may already be trained sufficiently to pass the course. Can they test out and become certified without having to pay the \$49?*

**DAN:** People will be offered three ways to become certified: 1. Successful completion of the online course. 2. Successful completion of the classroom course. 3. Knowledge and life-experience adequate to pass the certification exams. It has been mentioned that if we have large numbers of people taking the online course, development fees might be lowered per person. [EDITOR'S NOTE: It should be noted that fees are involved because the web-based administration of the course is through a commercial company. This is all still under development, so keep tuned to ARRL announcements and this newsletter for fills on the sketchy information provided here.]

**BEST WISHES  
FOR A HAPPY,  
HEALTHY  
HOLIDAY SEASON  
AND  
NEW YEAR!**