



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 is 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://wi-aresraces.org>

in PDF format, shortly after each issue is published.

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Emergency Packet Frequency: 145.610

[The following email messages were sent to a number of ECs and others in early June. Please read these if you have not done so already. More importantly, communicate the contents of these messages to all your ops (via your ARES or ham club newsletter and at meetings, so that all become aware. We want the widest possible dissemination of this info among hams within the state. Thanks.]

1. From Len Kreyer, N9QIP, EC for Emergency Packet

Just a heads up to all those who are running a packet station on 145.610 MHz. Each station that performs on this frequency shall be for EMERGENCY purposes only.

I am seeing many stations with mailboxes and invitations to drop each other a line using this frequency.

The emergency network relies on keeping this frequency clear of general BBS-type traffic and personal mailbox traffic.

If you have not done so, please limit your personal stations to ID only with no other text following your ID beacon. Do NOT use digi to beacon your station anywhere on this network. In a real EMERGENCY, beacons, digis, and IDs from stations other than ARES/RACES stations tend to clog the network and take valuable time away from EMERGENCY TRAFFIC. Failure to help keep traffic to a minimum will simply render this network useless.

If you wish to use your station for assisting the emergency network on a full-time basis, turn off the digi function and enable NODE operation on your TNC.

2. From Mack Brophy, N9NTB, WEM Amateur Radio Liaison and State Hamshack Manager.

The preceding message is forwarded for your information and help in keeping the ARES/RACES/RED CROSS/SKYWARN frequency of 145.610 MHz available for traffic related to ARES/RACES/RED CROSS/SKYWARN training, severe weather events, and actual emergencies. Wisconsin Emergency Management is in the process of linking the hamshack MSYS BBS (WEMBBS / WC9AAG) to the backbone network on 446.100 MHz, with the help of Len Kreyer (N9QIP) and Joel Papke (N9BQM). This will free up the packet station at WEM to operate on 145.610 MHz for keyboard to keyboard operation. Normal operations will be on Port 0 and the network will be on Port 1. We hope to have this transition to a separate backbone network link completed in the near future. Your help in turning off any digipeaters that are on 145.610 MHz will be greatly appreciated.

3. From Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR, SEC/CRO

Hello All:

Your SEC/CRO fully endorses Len Kreyer's request for limited use of the 145.610 MHz frequency for ARES/RACES/Red Cross/SKYWARN use during severe weather and other emergencies. Len and Mack have worked very hard to re-establish a reliable channel for emergency communications in the state, and it is important to all of us that their efforts

are supported. Please pass the word widely to your ARES/RACES ops and others, so that the use of this frequency for emergency services becomes common knowledge in Wisconsin. Thanks!

4. From Richard Polivka, N6NKO, ARRL OO (Official Observer), TS (Section Technical Specialist), OES (Section Official Emergency Station).

Greetings and salutations!!!! Along with the request to limit the traffic on 145.610 MHz, I would like to make the following request to all. Please email me the location, callsign and function of any equipment that anyone may have on 145.610. I am trying to come up with a map of 145.610 stations and nodes for Wisconsin. This map would be regularly updated and released for use by all concerned. Having a map of the 145.610 system will be a great use in getting messages through in a time of need. Thank you.

It's All in the Translation

By Dennis Rybickie, K9LGU, Section Traffic Manager
[From Denny's May STM report. Thanks, Denny!]

We have all kinds of codes in our hobby --- the Morse code, of course, a code of ethics, the "Q" signals, and even the bad code one gets from putting up antennas in mid-winter. Oh, sorry, an observant reader has just pointed out that a head code is only how it sounds in voice. In CW, it's still a cold. Especially if noses run in your family. So what about all those other codes?

It's our job to translate. Whether we are explaining the hobby to a non-ham, describing our activities to a public official, or delivering traffic with ARL numbers in the text, we need to convert the idea into plain, understandable words.

Sure, it's fun to have the jargon among us. We enjoy swapping acronyms --- QTH, BC610, EME, PSK-31, etc. --- but when we are in the company of non-hams, we need to do what we do best --- communicate.

It doesn't hurt to draw parallels to the Internet when explaining Ham Radio. It is important to show the differences, just as it is when Ham Radio is contrasted with CB. The fun in the hobby is the diversity it offers in ways to communicate with interesting people.

When delivering a radiogram to a non-ham, of course, we read the entire text of the message -- not the ARL numbers. In fact, even when delivering to a ham, it's a good idea to ask if the recipient has the

ARRL's list of radiograms. (Need one? They're free from HQ, from me, or from the ARRL website, <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/forms/>.)

When we explain the use of the National Traffic System to public officials, we need to be clear. Quite simply, the NTS is a way of getting messages across the city, state, or country in an accurate and orderly way. It is a method of supporting communications when the cell phones don't work and the other systems are overloaded. It may help to show a sample radiogram. There's no need to explain net protocol or the workings of the NTS unless someone asks. What is important is to let people know what is available to them in times of need.

We need to keep our faith in the hobby and in our practiced skills. We need to maintain our hope that we can serve through our hobby. And we need to be very clear about who we are and what we offer. Faith, hope, and, perhaps the greatest of these, clarity. 73 -- K9LGU / STM

Video Available

Remember the video profiled a couple of months ago? When Disaster Strikes, At Any Moment, Field Day Fever, Disaster Drill, The Big One and Last Voices from Kuwait -- all on a single tape from the ARRL. Several ARES/RACES units have viewed it at this point. You can schedule it for one of your meetings by sending me a note with the meeting date. I will ship it in time to arrive for your meeting at no cost to you. Show it and return it (about \$2- \$3 postage) when finished. Just let me know.

(Greg) Ramlow Moves; New EC in Waupaca

Greg has moved to Winnebago County and has joined as a member of Dan Lenz' group, effective 1 July. We thank him for his efforts in building a nucleus in Waupaca, and know he will be a valued new member of the Winnebago group. Before resigning, Greg did one last duty that all ECs should emulate. He looked at his group for the best ham to replace him, spoke with that person, and brought your SEC into the negotiations as the appointing authority. Accordingly, effective 1 July, Dan Williams, Sr. (KB9VLG) was appointed as EC in Waupaca County. Please enter the following information into your copy of the EC Roster, since it may be a few months before a new one is distributed.

Dan Williams, Sr., KB9VLG
N6690 E Long Lake Road
Wild Rose 54984
H: 715 256-4169 uncledan@athenet.net

Dan has been AEC for Waupaca County ARES/RACES and he has extensive WX spotter training. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the East Central Emergency Communications Committee. Welcome, Dan! The map and EC list on our website has already been updated.

Policy on Duplicates in the ARES/RACES Roster

Joe Ham is very interested in Weather. He loves studying about weather patterns and predictions, and has joined the special ARES/RACES group at Sullivan Weather to train with them and respond during severe weather emergencies. Tom Kucharski (KA9EWJ), Sullivan WX EC, considers him a valuable member of the group.

At the same time, Joe lives in Milwaukee and wants to be active in Milwaukee ARES/RACES. Jeananne Bargholz (N9VSV), EC for that group, is pleased to have him. He attends meetings, trains, and Jeananne considers him a valuable member of the group.

Is there anything wrong with this scenario? No!

In the hobby of ham radio, we can explore whatever aspect strikes our fancy – contesting, packet, ATV, Public Service, whatever. Indeed, we can engage in several of these at the same time, depending only on our interests and our time.

The same holds true for ARES/RACES. If there is a severe weather emergency, Joe can respond to Sullivan, or to whatever site Tom assigns him. During non-WX emergencies in Milwaukee, Joe can respond to assignments by Jeananne. The two ARES/RACES units are not mutually exclusive. Of course, Joe should make his dual interests known to both Tom and Jeananne, so there will be no surprises. However, both interests are perfectly valid and reasonable.

Accordingly, in the database, it is OK for a ham to be listed simultaneously in two different ARES/RACES units, so long as one is a regular county unit and the other is one of the Special Units. The five Special Units, listed on page 7 of your EC Roster, are ARES Packet, Central Wisconsin Repeater Association, Green Bay Weather, Sullivan Weather and Watertown.

On the other hand, it is not OK for a ham to be listed in two different county rosters (with one exception, to be noted below). I have purged all duplicates in the database at this point, by assigning each duplicate found to one county or the other. The concerned ECs know about this because I let each know when I did it. So, if you have a ham that wants to join your group, find out if they are already a member in some

other county. If so, they must drop one or the other membership. That doesn't mean they cannot attend both meetings and train with both groups! It just means that they will be recorded only once in the database.

What is this database stuff all about? I maintain a database on my computer of all RACES registered hams in the state. Since we now have moved to dual membership, this means that the database also represents all ARES members in the state, as well. I have called it the RACES database in the past because it started before ARES and RACES were combined, which occurred on 1Jan2000. However, the database is really both ARES and RACES, since everyone in ARES is also a member of RACES, and vice versa. I update that data (over 1,200 hams at present), whenever an EC sends me new names, deletions or corrections. Periodically, I send the updated data to Mack Brophy (N9NTB), our wonderful Amateur Radio/Wisconsin Emergency Management Liaison and Manager of the Wisconsin State Hamshack. He files the disk with WEM in the event there is need for the state to contact a ham or a group of hams, as in a RACES activation.

OK, so what is the other exception? Well, some ECs head up ARES/RACES groups in more than one county. Wes Jones (N9PHS) heads up Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn Counties (besides being the DEC in that part of the state). Of course, any roster showing the hams in any one of those three counties will include Wes on it.

So to summarize, only ECs may be duplicated in the county listings. Some non-EC hams may be listed in both a county roster and in the roster of a Special ARES/RACES Group. All other hams may be listed in only one county. I hope that is clear, but if not, feel free to contact me for clarification.

SET is Set

The annual Simulated Emergency Test is an ARRL function that comes in the fall. It can occur anytime between 1 September and 30 October, but the ARRL focus is the first weekend in October – this year, October 6. ***In Wisconsin, it we will have a statewide component to the SET this year and the tentative target date is Saturday, 6 October. The emphasis at the state level will be on those communications necessary to support mutual aid between Wisconsin counties. Accordingly, the statewide SET exercise within and between counties will revolve around use of voice VHF and UHF as the main communications mode. HF may be used when DEC's need to report to the SEC or WEM, but packet may also be used for these purposes.***

The statewide SET is not designed to take the place of SET exercises within your own county on that day, and ECs are encouraged to design local extensions to the statewide exercise that test your own units.

OK, so what will it involve? Here is a rundown. First, your DEC will be involved. At 8:00 a.m. on the day of the set, your SEC will contact each DEC with instructions. (If the DEC position in your district is vacant or if the DEC is unavailable, I will pick an EC to be Acting DEC). Once the DECs have been briefed, they will activate all ARES/RACES groups in their district and pass each a very short authentication phrase. When an individual group is operational in accordance with their instructions, the group must report that fact back to their DEC. The report must be in NTS format, and contain:

- Time operational.
- Number of ops available for assignment.
- The short authentication phrase they received from the DEC when activated.

The report may be sent over any amateur frequency or mode except HF SSB. **However, there is a "kicker" concerning how this message may be sent.**

It must **not** be sent direct to the DEC, but rather **through a second ARES/RACES group**. The second group then passes the message to the DEC's group and they then see that the DEC receives it.

In addition, a group that provides communications support for a DEC may **not** pass their message direct to the DEC, but rather through a second group out of the DECs home county. That second group may not pass the message directly back to the originator, but must pass it to a third group, who can then pass it back to the originating group.

To recap, if you are not providing communications support for a DEC, your ARES/RACES unit sends your message to the DEC through another county's unit. If you are, you send it to another county's unit, who sends it to yet another, then back to you for delivery to the DEC.

When DECs have received reports from all of their participating groups, or at the latest at 10:30 a.m., they will forward (using any amateur mode) a summary of their results to the SEC, c/o the hamshack at WEM (WC9AAG). The summary will identify the units reporting and the number of ops ready for assignment in each. Mack Brophy (N9NTB, WI State Hamshack Manager) or Sam Rowe (KG9NG, Dane EC) or his ops will be staffing the shack, and will forward the report to WB9RQR via packet or email.

Of course, the results will be published in the November newsletter. And, your SEC will be doing

some background work to identify Acting DECs where necessary, and getting the authentication phrases into the mail to all participating DECs and Acting DECs (each county's phrase will be different).

Again, you are encouraged to build on this simple activity. For example, since you are communicating with neighboring ARES/RACES units, you could expand with some scenario that requires passing of additional messages between you. Alternatively, you can design something totally independent. That is up to you, as usual. If you participate in just the activity outlined above, the goal of fostering inter-county communications and potential mutual aid will have been met at the state level.

Be advised that some of this may change "on the fly" as communications develop on that day. Also, be advised that I have not told you everything there is to know about the details of the exercise. The aim is to test our ability to communicate, and if you knew every detail, it would not be as good a test. So, lets have at it, and have fun, too!

3rd Annual EC Meeting – December 1st

Typically held the first Saturday in December, the event in the past has been held at WEM in Madison (for which we are appreciative – a very nice facility). Some have asked if we could possibly hold the next one further up the state – in a more central location – so that it would not be such a travel burden for some ECs. The answer is, YES, but where? Do you know of a good facility that could host us? Somewhere that we could have lunch brought in. Hours 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Last year's attendance was exactly the number of counties in Wisconsin - 72. Let me know if you have an idea.

