



The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



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WISCONSIN SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR CHIEF RACES RADIO OFFICER AND EDITOR:

Stanley Kaplan, WB9RQR
105 Martin Drive
Port Washington, WI 53074-9654
(262) 284-9346
skaplan@mcw.edu

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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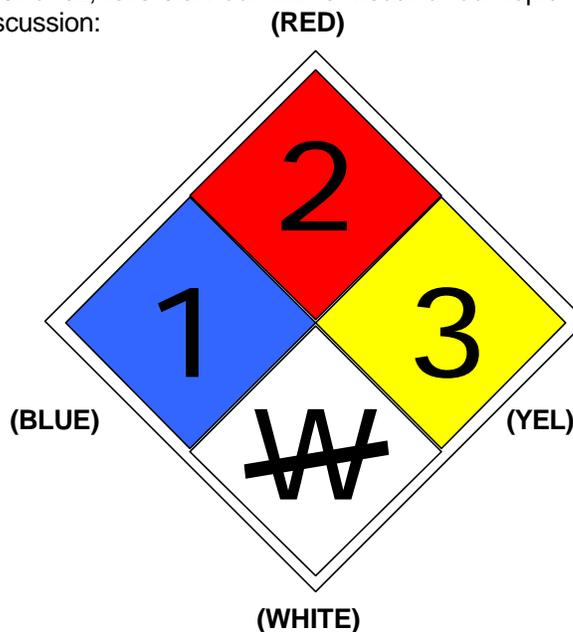
The HazMat Diamond

By Ray Meyer, N9PBY

[Aside from being our EC for ARES Packet, and Webmaster of the ARES/RACES web site (<http://wi-aresraces.org>), Ray is a Lieutenant in the Ozaukee County Water Safety Patrol (our Lake Michigan Rescue Boat) and a certified HazMat Technician and member of the Ozaukee County Level B HazMat Team. That's what keeps him busy when he is not working at his full time job as an engineer. Whew! Anyway, in November, OZARES had a Basic Awareness HazMat refresher course (the Basic Awareness level is the same level required of all police and firefighters in the state). There were several questions during the training that pertained to the HazMat sign that one sees here and there, so Ray wrote an article on it for the OZARES Newsletter. Here is Ray's article, modified slightly. Stan]

So what is that multicolored diamond for? What does it mean? For those with inquiring minds, here's a quick introduction to the NFPA 704 diamond.

First of all, let's start out with a visual of our topic of discussion:



(Note: due to mechanical reproduction of the newsletter, this graphic may appear in shades of gray. To view the colors, look at the version posted on the ARES/RACES website, <http://wi-aresraces.org>. In this example, the colors are labeled. The top (containing a 2) is red, the left (1) is blue, the right (3) is yellow and the bottom (W) is white. The color codes are fully explained later in the text.)

On a first look, it seems pretty cryptic. We'll get to what it all means in a moment. But first, here's a little history and background on our subject.

The diamond label or placard is actually part of a standard established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards by developing codes, facilitating research and advocating training and education. The particular standard for this labeling system is NFPA code 704. While this labeling system had been under development since the late 1950's, it was not identified as an actual standard until 1990.

Like the four digit, UN placard numbers seen on many trucks, its purpose is to help alert fire fighters and first responders that potentially hazardous chemicals exist at a scene. Unlike the UN numbers, it does not specifically identify the chemical (or chemicals); rather it communicates the potential hazards the chemicals present. It is important to note that the diamond can represent all of the chemicals present inside a building in just one diamond. Also, the dia-

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR diamond is intended for use with building and other fixed structures. For hazardous chemical transportation, the UN numbers must be displayed in accordance with their respective guidelines.

Now, let's discuss how the diamond does its job. The diamond is divided up into four sections. Each section represents a specific characteristic or hazard of the chemical(s) present. The top, left, and right sections will always contain a number between 0 and 4. This number represents the severity of the specific hazard, 0 being the lowest (none) and 4 being the highest (extreme). The top section is for the flammability of the chemical(s) and is subsequently colored red. A number 4 in this section means that the chemical(s) are extremely flammable. Flammable gases such as propane are labeled with a value of 4 in this section. Likewise, chemicals that will not burn are given a value of 0.

The left quadrant is blue for the health risks associated with the chemical(s). A value of 4 is given to chemicals that can be very harmful or even fatal with only a brief and minimal exposure. A value of 0 means that no unusual health risk is present. The right quadrant signifies if the chemical(s) are reactive and is colored yellow. A value of 4 tells you that the chemical(s) are potentially explosive at room temperature. Similarly, a value of 0 tells you that the chemical(s) are stable. Below is a more in depth and more technical list on the numbers assigned to the specific hazards.

Red – Flammability

- 4 Danger: Flammable gas or extremely flammable liquid
- 3 Warning: Flammable liquid with a flash point below 100°F
- 2 Caution: Combustible liquid with a flash point between 100°F and 200°F
- 1 Combustible if heated
- 0 Will not burn

Blue – Health

- 4 Danger: May be fatal on short exposure. Specialized protective equipment is needed.
- 3 Warning: Corrosive or toxic. Avoid inhalation or skin exposure.
- 2 Warning: May be harmful if inhaled or absorbed.
- 1 Caution: May cause irritation.
- 0 No unusual hazard.

Yellow – Reactivity

- 4 Danger: Explosive material at room temperature.
- 3 Danger: May be explosive if shocked, heated under confinement, or mixed with water.

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2 Warning: Unstable or may react violently if mixed with water.

1 Caution: May react if heated or mixed with water, but not violently.

0 Not reactive when mixed with water.

But wait, what about the bottom white section? This section reserved for any specialized hazards the chemical(s) may present. A letter W with a slash through it means that the chemical reacts to water. Obviously, this is a very important thing for fire fighters to know when they arrive on the scene of a fire. The letters OX indicate that the chemical(s) are oxidizers and can potentially cause a fire to burn more violently by supplementing it with oxygen. This section can also be left blank if no special hazard exists, and is also the only section that can be left blank.

According to the NFPA 704 standard, W, OX, and a blank section are the only recognized symbols allowed in the bottom section. However, if you get around to looking at a bunch of these diamonds in use, you will find that many have other letters and symbols present. How did this happen? In all likelihood, these additional symbols found their way onto the NFPA diamond from HAZCOM, a hazards communication standard widely used in industry that was established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). HAZCOM uses the same color codes and numeric values as part of its chemical identification. As a result, you will sometimes see symbols such as OXY for oxidizer, ACID, COR for corrosive, ALK for alkaline, just to name a few. In some instances, you may see a radioactive symbol if the material poses a radiation hazard, or even a bio-hazard symbol. All of these specialized hazards are nice to know, but again it is worth mentioning that they are not supported under the NFPA 704 standard.

With that all said, you should now have a good working knowledge about the NFPA diamond and how it works to communicate chemical hazards. If you work or live nearby an industrial manufacturing plant, take a look for the diamond. It should be prominently displayed at major entrances, as well as outbuildings, tanks and other storage areas where hazardous chemicals exist. Possessing the knowledge of how the diamond works, it will no longer appear as a colorful, cryptic sign, but rather a very quick and effective means of telling you what to look out for with the chemicals present inside.

Traffic FAQ #2

by Dennis Rybicke, K9LGU
Wisconsin Section Traffic Manager

What's up with all this "junk" traffic? If you have ever attempted delivery of a message only to discover the recipient had passed away a year ago, the sender of the message wasn't even known by the recipient, or the originating station had inaccurate information about the recipient, you know how embarrassing it can be. It's almost enough to make a person want to relegate his messages to Email and the U. S. Postal Service.

So what's a traffic operator to do? First, it's helpful to understand what the sender of the message is trying to do. Very likely, the originating station is attempting to exercise the NTS by sending a lot of routine traffic - and isn't able to check on the necessary details. True, it keeps the system working, but it can also be discouraging. As mentioned in my answer to FAQ #1, we do need to keep the input to the NTS flowing. On the other hand, it would be more satisfying to handle traffic which has more significance and which is not addressed to a Silent Key.

Second, one needs to have a course of action. Your possible responses are - (1) apologize for the error to the person accepting the message and file it, (2) apologize and then advise the originating station to help avoid future problems, (3) swear off traffic handling, or (4) start filling the NTS with meaningful traffic - accurately addressed and properly formatted. Of course, I advocate a combination of #2 and #4 as the solution to the problem. Our task is to preserve and enhance the NTS, keeping it in readiness for the support it can offer. If we put plenty of "good" messages into the system, the need for the generic will fade like 80 meters under the aurora. Next question?

If you haven't discovered it, check out this link especially for CW (but also for all other) traffic handlers --

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/nts-mpg/pdf/MPG304A.pdf>

How did we do in 2002? Section nets had a total of 39,473 checkins and handled 21,753 pieces of traffic in 2,561 net sessions lasting 73,219 minutes. Good work! 73, Denny

FLASH! WE Energies Awards Grant

Great news!

BACKGROUND: WE Energies is a gas and electric power provider for parts of Wisconsin. They were recently recognized with an award from an industry body for their high reliability in providing electricity to their customers. They decided to commemorate this with an award of a substantial grant to some group that works in emergencies. They settled on ARES/RACES and contacted your SEC. One requirement they had was that the funds must go to a non-profit entity (an official 501(c)3 organization), and Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, agreed to have his EC

Resources, Ltd., act as the 501(c)3 for the involved counties.

WHAT COUNTIES AND HOW MUCH? WE Energies came to us with the apportionment and fund distribution already in place; we had no hand in the process. Their award was simply targeted to those counties in which they had 5,000 or more WE Energy customers. That includes Calumet, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Racine, Shawano, Sheboygan, Vilas, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca and Winnebago, for a total of 17 counties.

Their funding scheme is as follows. Milwaukee County, which had previously applied to WE for a grant, will receive \$9,000. Since they are their own 501(c)3, this amount will go direct to them, and not through EC Resources. EC Resources will handle all of the remaining funds for ARES/RACES units. Waukesha County will receive \$6,000. Racine County will receive \$3,000. All other counties in the list above will receive \$1,500 each.

HOW IT WILL WORK: ECs will prepare a list of hardware items (radios, TNCs, antennas, cabling, etc.) with current prices, up to the limit of the award. Only tangible hardware items are permitted. The EC will submit this list to EC Resources, Ltd., and EC Resources will mail a check to the EC. The EC will then purchase the items and provide documentation of the purchases for EC Resources files.

The equipment must be used for Wisconsin ARES/RACES purposes. If an ARES/RACES unit disbands for any reason (automatic if an EC resigns with no impending replacement), the equipment must be delivered to the SEC for either redistribution or for holding until the unit reforms (at the discretion of the SEC).

We are excited about this timely infusion of needed equipment into Wisconsin ARES/RACES, and grateful to WE Energies for targeting us for the award! Hopefully, other energy utilities in the state will pick up the lead taken by WE Energies, and will make similar donations for other counties.

Leadership Changes

Welcome Peter Stenske, AB9DZ, as the new EC for St. Croix County. Awhile back, Peter enrolled in the EmComm I course, and luck of the draw gave him Stan as mentor. He completed the course with flying colors, and later sent an application for ARES membership direct to ARRL HQ. Well, guess who the ARRL forwarded it to - Stan, of course. So, Stan did some gentle arm-twisting, and Peter applied for and received the St. Croix EC spot. Welcome Peter at ab9dz@arrl.net. His data is already posted in the EC Roster on our website.

A Review of Two Software Packages

by John Leekley, WB9SMM

DEC, SE WI

Here are reviews of two programs you will want to look at, and possibly add to your kit: I have not been able to use either program in "real life" (that is: under fire in a live operation). So the point of this article is to bring them to your attention so that you can get them, load them up and use them when the opportunity arises. Whoever is first able to put them to the test should write up their experience for the rest of us.

TRANSAID-MCI is a patient-tracking program for mass casualties. It is an overlay to Microsoft Access – Access must be previously installed on the computer. Once installed, it appears to be easy to use. The author claims to be a two-fingered typist but still able to make six entries per minute. Its primary purpose is casualty management, but it also has provision for tracking vehicles, personnel and facilities. The Casualty Management screen has eight fields: METTAG, AGE, SEX, LAST 4 (digits of a SS number, I guess), TRIAGE MEDS, PRIORITY, ENTRY TIME and TO FACILITY. The METTAG and PRIORITY fields are required. The ENTRY TIME field is automatic. The rest of the fields are optional. A different screen allows for the addition of a name to the METTAG identification. The Facilities screen lists the name(s) of the hospital(s), the number of beds available and the distance in miles. Similarly, the Vehicles screen is used to list the type, capacity and availability of vehicles used to transport victims, and a Personnel screen lists available personnel. In addition to the report screens, there is a screen called "Table Top Exercise" that is not explained in the (rather sketchy) documentation. That is something to look into.

TRANSAID looks to be a robust, but very specialized program, designed to be used for mass casualty events. Ideally, the next outfit that gets a chance to participate in a hospital mass casualty drill should make a determined effort to use this program and put it through its paces. I got the program from Stan, free. (You will have to have your own copy of Access, however.) Best to ask Stan for a copy, and if you like it, get the latest version from the author.

The Emergency Manager Network Log is a program that should see immediate use this spring. It's a data management program geared directly to the needs of a ham net. This program will, however, require an assistant NCS to do the data entry. And it

would probably be best if he or she had touch-typing skills. That said, it is a robust program. There are six screens: Messages, People (Missing and Located), Facilities, Resources and Needs, Team and Other. One neat feature is that the program can work on a network using a common database. Thus, one or two (or more) operators can be entering data while another sorts and prints.

The Messages screen is just what it says: a list of messages with from/to, delivery, etc., information fields. It's not the ARRL's NTS format, but it still delivers the necessary information. The People screen would be used in a missing persons situation. The Facilities screen stores information on name, location, resources, and operator(s) assigned (shelters, EOC, etc.). The Resources and Needs screen is a simple list of available resources and items needed. The Team screen would be used to list hams available and their assignments. The Other screen is a catch-all screen, totally unformatted for lists that don't fit elsewhere.

As indicated above, this program will be useful when there are one or two additional operators (who have touch-typing skills) available to do the data entry. It would probably be best if they were co-located with Net Control so that Net Control could give input and have immediate access to the stored information. It is NOT a place to record the stream-of-consciousness shorthand notes that a NCS takes and relies on as the calls and messages fly back and forth.

The Emergency Manager program is available at <http://www.n3fjp.com>. You can download a 45-day trial version. Registration is \$15 to get unlimited use. I spent \$28 for the CD. For a few extra bucks, the N3FJP disk has a bunch of specialized logging programs for Field Day and contests (I count 22) and a ham club database.

Corrected Copy

The table below is corrected from the one that appeared in the Dec 2002 Newsletter, in the article by Gary Bargholz, N9UUR, on New Two-Meter Repeater Pairs (1 MHz Splits). The corrected data is in bold-face. Please hand-edit your saved copies.

OUTPUT	INPUT	USE
146.415	147. 415	Coordinated
146.430	147.430	*SNP-Itinerant/Portable
146.445	147.445	*SNP-Itinerant/Portable
146.460	147.460	SNP – Any
146.475	147.475	Coordinated
146.490	147.490	Coordinated

*SNP = Shared, Not Protected