



# The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



VOLUME 5 NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2003

## 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.

**Deadlines:** The newsletter is mailed on or about the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the date shown on the issue. Thus, the February issue is mailed on or about the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. Articles and notices must reach the editor no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to be considered for the February issue.

Permission is granted to reprint articles from this newsletter provided credit is given as follows: "Reprinted from The Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator Newsletter, WB9RQR, Editor".

## HEAT

By Rusty Kapela, NWS-Sullivan

Since 1982, heat waves have been responsible for more deaths in Wisconsin than all other natural disasters combined. The hot summer weather of 1995 claimed 154 Wisconsin residents and forced another 400 people to seek medical treatment. In 1999, at least 20 people died from the effects of heat. For 2001, the total was 15, followed by 8 direct heat-related deaths in 2002/2003 and 5 indirect.

Since 1982, heat-related deaths have occurred in Wisconsin during the months of April through September.

Medical records indicate that people on certain medications, the elderly and young children face the highest risk of heat-related death. Furthermore, experience has shown that being aware of the dangers of

extreme heat, and knowing what precautions to take, reduces the risk of heat-related exhaustion or death.

Here are some symptoms of heat-related illness and what to do [courtesy of the Milwaukee Health Department. Visit their web site at (all lower case)]

<http://www.ci.mil.wi.us/citygov/health/index.htm>

**Heat cramps:** Cramps or muscle spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs. Solution: stop activity, cool down, and drink plain water, clear juice or a sports drink.

**Heat exhaustion:** Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea or fainting. Solution: cool down; seek medical attention if person has heart problems or high blood pressure.

**Heat stroke:** Extremely high body temperature. Red, hot dry skin, rapid pulse, throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, and unconsciousness. Solution: call 911 and cool the victim with a shower or hose until help arrives.

**How to stay cool:** If possible, spend time in an air-conditioned environment. If this is not possible, basements are often several degrees cooler. Cover windows to prevent direct sunlight from entering. Use fans to blow hot air outside if over 95 degrees in the room.

## Wisconsin Nets

By Dennis Rybicki, K9LGU, STM

**FAQ: Where do second-goes go?** Net controls know that traffic nets are for traffic and visiting comes second. To hold the net open for late checking with traffic or who can handle traffic, the NCS may start a roundtable. This adds to the camaraderie of the net and lets stations get used to the voice and style of each operator. Frequently, the NCS will list the traffic outstanding and stand by for additional check-ins. It's nice to hear net members' comments, but second goes always go after traffic handling.

**FAQ: Why should I volunteer as NCS?** Every net needs a net control station. It's the operator who calls up the net, keeps things organized, and arranges for traffic to be passed efficiently. It's not a difficult task (See **How to be an NCS** on the ARRL Wisconsin section page). It takes little time more than the duration of the net, and it provides two valuable services.

(1) Having an NCS allows the net to function by handling the listed traffic, accepting the liaison from other NTS nets, designating liaison to subsequent nets, in short, carrying out the business of the net. It lets check-ins list traffic, test equipment, and builds camaraderie with other members of the net. It keeps order - recognizing stations and calling on the next station to transmit. Without an NCS, it's just a frequency with a roundtable discussion.

(2) Taking on the duties of the NCS trains the volunteer and the net members. It sharpens skills in listening, organization, and decision making for the NCS. It permits check-ins to become used to a new voice, a new style. If they are considerate, they will practice adjusting their timing for checking in to make it easier for the new NCS. Learning that flexibility is good training for any net - whether it's for severe weather, disaster relief, or traffic handling.

Train yourself; train the check-ins. Train, train, train. I know it sounds like I've got a one-track mind, but its time some folks were railroaded into being a volunteer NCS.

## Repeater Security Update

Once again, let me emphasize that repeater locations should not be released to anyone not authorized to receive such information!

We have had recent instances of queries from unauthorized persons here in Wisconsin concerning frequencies, locations and other data concerning Amateur repeaters. If such information were to be charted by persons with destructive motives, it could lead to vulnerability of our emergency communications networks, perhaps at a time when they are needed most. Think before releasing such information!

On the other hand, we need not go overboard with such precautions. Frequencies are widely advertised in the amateur community, as they should be. General coverage area of repeaters may also be released without restriction. And, any information requested by ARES/RACES officials or WAR (Wisconsin Association of Repeater) should be provided without restriction. You need not worry about WAR, since they do not publish information that could increase the vulnerability of our repeaters. Just make sure the requesting persons are who they claim to be. If you have any doubts, run the request past your SEC to make sure it is OK.

Remember that old WW II adage, "Loose lips sink ships"? Well, here is one for us ARES/RACES hams: "Repeater data can help al-Quida." Enough said?

## Lightning Awareness

By Rusty Kapela, NWS-Sullivan

For more information on lightning, go to <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/>.

### SOME LIGHTNING FACTS

- In the USA, about 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes occur each year.
- An average of 69 people are killed each year by lightning. That is more than the annual number of people killed by tornadoes or hurricanes.
- About 300 injury cases are reported each year, but the actual number is likely much higher. People who are injured by lightning often report a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms.

### PART OF THE PROBLEM

- Many people don't understand all the dangers associated with thunderstorms and lightning, and don't act properly or in a timely fashion.

### THE DANGERS OF LIGHTNING

- Each and every flash of cloud-to-ground lightning is a potential killer.
- Even though the visible flash struck nearby, many victims are struck by the lightning current moving in and along the ground.
- Lightning can strike as much as 10 miles away from the rain area in a thunderstorm. That is about the distance that you are able to hear the thunder from the storm.
- If you can hear thunder, it's safe to say that you are within striking distance of lightning.

### OUTDOOR DANGERS

- Those involved in activities such as boating, swimming, fishing bicycling, golfing, jogging, walking, hiking, camping, or working out of doors all need to take the appropriate actions in a timely manner when thunderstorms approach.
- Where organized sports activities are taking place, coaches, umpires, referees, or camp counselors must protect the safety of the participants by stopping the activities sooner, so that the participants and spectators can get to a safe place before the lightning threat becomes significant.

### INDOOR DANGERS

- People should stay away from windows and doors and avoid contact with anything that conducts electricity.
- People may also want to take certain actions well before the storm to protect property

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR within their homes, such as electronic equipment.

#### MEDICAL TIPS

- In the unfortunate event that a person is struck by lightning, medical care, such as CPR, may be needed immediately to save their life.
- Cardiac arrest and irregularities, burns, and nerve damage are common in cases where people are struck by lightning.

#### SOME SAFETY TIPS

- When a thunderstorm threatens and you are outside, the very best protection will be inside a completely enclosed building or hard-topped vehicle. A carport, open garage, picnic shelter, or covered patio is not recommended.
- Stay away from tall objects such as trees or poles, and get off or stay away from open water, golf courses, and open fields.
- If caught in the open, go to a low area such as a ravine or valley. Avoid being the tallest object, crouch on the balls of your feet in the open, far away from trees. Avoid congregating in groups; keep several yards of space between individuals.
- Get off or out of open or metal vehicles, such as convertibles, golf carts, motorcycles, bicycles, and tractors.
- If a thunderstorm is approaching and you feel your hair stand on end, lightning may be about to strike. Drop to your knees and bend forward, resting your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.
- When the rain with a thunderstorm ends, it is still not safe to go out. Remember the 30-minute rule - wait 30 minutes past the last roll of thunder is heard before venturing outside again.

## Membership Statistics

Thought you'd like to know. We have five counties with more than 49 ARES/RACES members: Brown, Dodge, Door, Marathon and Milwaukee.

We have five counties with between 40 and 49 members: Dane, Douglas, La Crosse, Racine and Wood.

We also have five counties with between 30 and 39 members: Lincoln, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Walworth and Winnebago.

Eleven counties have between 20 and 29 members: Burnett, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jefferson, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Portage, Taylor, Waukesha and Waupaca.

August 2003

Page 3

Seventeen counties have between 10 and 19 members, and 23 counties have fewer than 10.

There are 8 of the 72 counties with no EC (and therefore, no ARES/RACES group): Rusk, Pepin, Buffalo, Monroe, Florence, Langlade, Menomonee and Green Lake. Pepin and Buffalo are pending possible appointment of a new EC in the near future. Know any good hams to take one or more of the others? Willing to take a neighboring county under your wing?

Grand total of ARES/RACES members at this writing (1Jul03): 1,349, or roughly 12% of all licensed hams in Wisconsin (the cream of the crop, of course!).  
Stan

## Current EmComm Statistics

By Jack Morrison, N9SFG, Asst SEC for Training

ARES/RACES members, including those in leadership positions, are progressing well in EmComm training in Wisconsin. Currently, 125 members (about 9% of all ARES/RACES members in the state) have taken one, two or all three of the courses. The breakdown: 89 have taken EmComm I, 23 have taken I and II, and 13 have taken I, II and III.

Among ECs (72 possible county positions, 64 filled), 13 have completed EmComm I, and 7 more have completed all three courses. This totals 20, or 31% of the current EC population. A number of others are now enrolled and working toward completion.

We have 8 of the 9 possible DEC slots filled in the state, and of the 8, 5 (63%) have taken one or more of the three courses. Two DECs have completed all three (John Leekley, WB9SMM, Southeast; Bill Niemuth, KB9ENO, East Central).

Yes, those at the top are also participating. One Asst SEC has completed EmComm I, and the other and your SEC have completed all three. Indeed, Stan and I have been Mentors in the program for quite awhile. I have personally mentored 112 students, and Stan has mentored 81. A number of ECs have also been quite active in the mentoring program.

We'll keep you posted with updates from time to time concerning this important training function in Wisconsin.

## True Volunteerism

Virtually all of the readers of the EC Newsletter are volunteers – from regular members of ARES/RACES units to AECs, ECs, DECs and others in leadership positions. All of you provide your time, knowledge and personal equipment to make our organization work in its mission of providing emergency communications. We all appreciate each other's volunteerism,

The Wisconsin EMERGENCY COORDINATOR and so do many of the professionals that we work with – sheriffs, fire chiefs, emergency managers and others whose job is to get things back to normal when Ma Nature or other humans send things awry.

But there are volunteers among us who work in the background, often unseen, and they provide critical infrastructure to Wisconsin ARES/RACES. There are actually dozens of such folks in our organization, and I would like to mention a few for their unsung support that makes everything work – for me and for you.

**Don Michalski, W9IXG**, is our **Section (state) Manager**. There has been no bigger supporter of ARES/RACES than Don. Aside from the fact that he himself is an active member of an ARES/RACES unit (Dane), and that he activates just like other operators to staff the Hamshack at WEM or other critical sites during emergencies, Don has provided nothing less than total Section support to ARES/RACES since he took the SM position. He seamlessly incorporates ARES/RACES goals into ARRL goals in our state. We don't have a big budget in our Section, but whatever is there is generously provided to ARES/RACES whenever possible. There is no doubt in your SEC's mind that a large measure of whatever success we have had is because of Don's wonderful support. And he brags about us! We owe Don a big thank you.

**Mack Brophy, N9NTB**, our **State Hamshack Manager**, is another we owe thanks to. Yes, we all groan at the volume of emails on all sorts of topics that we get from Mack! Sometimes, the topics seemingly have much more to do with Wisconsin Emergency Management than ARES/RACES. But, you know what? Mack is one of those rare individuals with feet planted in two different fields, and as such, he is using his dual talents and knowledge to teach people in both fields about the other. He is keeping us hams informed about happenings in WEM, and I can assure you, he is also keeping WEM informed about happenings in ARES/RACES. Thus, Mack is an ambassador to both, which turns out to be a vitally needed activity. For sure, he keeps all those radios in the Hamshack humming and on frequency, and in use each week in checking into various federal nets. But it is his ambassadorial activity that really makes a mark on Wisconsin ARES/RACES. So there, Mack, thank you very much, indeed!

**Ray Meyer, N9PBY**, is our **State Packet Manager**, and he has done an excellent job at promoting packet networks in Wisconsin. But the biggest thank you we owe to Ray is as **Webmaster** of the ARES/RACES website. Ray and your SEC collaborated when it was time to design the site, but your SEC's contribution was to delineate those items that needed to be included. Ray himself put it all together and designed

August 2003

Page 4

the pages, colors, navigation links and so on, single-handedly. You can see on the site lot of his artistry and principles of good layout. The site is seen by thousands of web viewers each year from all over the world, and I have had many positive comments on it over the years from outside our state. So Ray, too, is an ambassador - to the world external to Wisconsin ARES/RACES. And he is also the guy who posts new documents; maps and rosters whenever changes are made to the data or new tools are ready for use by ECs. That happens a lot, because ARES/RACES is a living, growing organization. So thanks, Ambassador Ray, for your consistent and continued support!

I could go on and on, but then there would be many more thanks to record here. Actually, over 1,300! These are just a few that stand out in my mind because I see the effects of their work constantly. Send these guys your personal thanks, when you get the chance. And, by the way, thank **YOU** for volunteering! Stan

---

## What if I forget?

By Dennis Rybicke, K9LGU, STM

Amateurs are an understanding lot. We recognize that there are other parts to life beyond Ham Radio. We accept that an operator's life may be filled with more than his hobby, and we agree that (perhaps except for Field Day) radio operation must be kept in perspective. So we know that Hams, too, forget.

If you forget when the section net meets, you can find it through the ARRL web page by clicking on the Wisconsin section. If you forget how to handle a message, you can find ARRL Operating Aid FSD-218 on the ARRL web page or in your mailbox, if you ask your STM for a copy. If you disremember where you put your list of ARL Numbered Radiograms, you can download one from ARRL, or I will be glad to send you one, so it will be handy the next time you deliver a message.

If you forget how to count the check or how voice traffic is sent, links to instructions are on Don's Wisconsin web page at ARRL. If the names or locations of other stations who check into the Wisconsin nets don't readily come to mind, get a QNI Index from your STM or copy it from the ARRL Wisconsin Web page link. In fact, if you can't remember the name or face of that old-timer who checked WIN in 1959, there's even a link to a special photo from the same ARRL page.

And if you are worried about forgetting things, forget it.

---

**"We provide communications,  
when no one else can."**