

(slide 1)

Welcome to Training Bulletin #7 “Winlink Installation and Operation”. Think of it as an introduction to Winlink.

(click-slide 2)

Winlink, in short, is a system of sending email, even if the internet isn’t available, making it a very valuable resource in an emergency or disaster situation.

(click-2.1)

In addition to email, Winlink has a large number of built in forms including ICS forms making it very valuable, even if the internet is available.

(click-2.2)

WINLINK has robust error correction making it 100% error free and because it’s digital, the chance for errors while sending messages by phone are eliminated.

(click 2.3)

The following video is a clip from “What Is Winlink”, produced and narrated by Rick Frost, K4REF. Rick holds an Amateur Extra Class license. He has a passion for emergency management and volunteers his time with both the Tennessee and Kentucky Emergency Management Agencies. Rick has a collection of Winlink training videos. Visit his YouTube site and check out what all he has there.

(click for slide 3 to start ‘What is Winlink’ video)

(Click for slide 4)

So, to recap, Winlink is

a means to send and receive email and messages over the internet using Telnet...

..... or over the air using amateur radio if the internet is disabled or you’re just not in range of an internet provider.

over the air using HF, VHF, or UHF Winlink gateways.

Winlink is interoperable with our first response served agencies.

And flexible enough to handle formatted email messages and a wide variety of agency specific forms.

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Sending a Winlink email is as simple as filling out a very standard email form.

Or you can send an ARRL Radiogram for the National Traffic System.

Other available forms include the Red Cross, Salvation Army SATERN, even SHARES forms.

Winlink includes a library of ICS forms including the ICS-213 General Message form, the ICS-205 Incident Radio Communications Plan

and even the ACS-309 Station Log. In fact, Winlink will generate a station log for you whenever you like.

In order to use Winlink, you need a Winlink account

Josh Roskos, KC9WWH, is the WI ARES/RACES West Central District Emergency Coordinator. He's also pretty good at producing YouTube productions too including this Beginner's Guide to Winlink.

(click 6a to start video 'Beginner's Guide to Setting Up Winlink')

(Click for Slide 7)

There's a few things Josh mentioned in his video that I'd like to expand upon. For Instance.

Josh talked about completing the Winlink Express Properties by clicking 'Settings' then 'Winlink Express Setup'.

There's a feature on this page called 'Auxiliary Callsigns and Tactical Addresses'.

I'd like you to add 'WIARES' as a tactical address. Winlink messages can be sent to a tactical address. A message sent to WIARES will go to everyone with the WIARES tactical address.

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Another feature I'd like to mention is having your Winlink messages sent to your email address.

From the main Winlink Express screen, click on Settings, then Update User Options. In the field below 'Forward my messages to this alternate address', you can enter your email address and Winlink will forward your incoming messages to this address. To cancel this feature, just clear out this field.

(Slick for slide 9)

Josh demonstrated sending a Winlink message to a station without a Winlink account and receiving an 'undeliverable message' notice from the system. It is possible to send a Winlink message to someone without a Winlink account. Instead of putting a call sign in the 'to' field, put in a valid email address. The Winlink CMS system will forward the message to this address.

So, briefly, here's how Winlink works.

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By radio, a station sends a Winlink message over HF, VHF, or UHF to an RMS gateway.

The gateway forwards the messages on to a network of CMS message servers spread out all over the world and interconnected with each other so that they all have the same information.

The CMS servers route the incoming messages to their destinations and check for any messages for any of the stations checked in forwarding them back to the RMS gateway stations for delivery.

If the internet is available, a station can use the 'Telnet' feature

Telnet forwards messages directly to the CMS servers. Any incoming traffic for the sending stations is automatically sent back.

There's another way to send Winlink messages which doesn't use any of the Winlink infrastructure. It's called Peer to Peer or P2P.

(click for slide 11 video 'Winlink Peer to Peer Email')

(click for side 12)

So, here's how Peer to Peer works. Say that station 1 has traffic for Station 2.

(click for slide 13)

Station 1 drafts the message .....

..... and sets 'Send As:' to 'Peer to Peer Message' and clicks 'Post to Outbox'.

(click slide 14)

From Winlink's main screen, Station 1, the sender, opens the 'Open Session' drop down list and selects 'Winmor P2P', then clicks 'Open Session'.

When the Winlink session window opens, Station 1 fills in the receiving station's call sign and 'Center Frequency', then clicks 'Start'.

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As the video said, the two stations then need to work out in advance when and on what frequency the message will be sent. Peer to Peer works on any frequency or band, HF, VHF, or UHF. At the appointed time and frequency, Station 1 sends his or her traffic.

The message goes directly to Station 2 by passing the RMS and CMS servers and Telnet.

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Here's a Peer to Peer exercise to help your group practice Peer to Peer message relay. The point of the exercise is the practice. It's okay if a few mistakes are made. That's what practice is for

Net control drafts a message and negotiates with Station #1 on how and when to send it .....

..... and sends the message.

After receiving the message, Station 1 repeats the process with Station 2.

Station 2 does likewise with Station 3.

Finally, Station 3 again repeats the process to send the message to net control.

(click slide 17)

To summarize, this training bulletin introduced you to Winlink. Explained the process to download Winlink Express, install it on your computer, and set up a Winlink account.

Demonstrated sending Winlink messages over the air or over the internet

And demonstrated how to use Winlink Peer to Peer.

(click slide 18)

If you have questions on anything in this training bulletin ...

Practice with Winlink.

Feel free to contact ASEC for Training Skip Sharpe at [W9REL@ARRL.net](mailto:W9REL@ARRL.net)

I hope you enjoyed and got some useful information from this training bulletin.

73 everyone.