



# Amateur Radio Emergency Service

## Information Sheet

Washington County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (WCARES)

### What is the Amateur Radio Emergency Service?

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is a group of Federally licensed Amateur Radio (slang = "ham radio") operators who volunteer their skills to assist public safety agencies in the event of a disaster or other incident. During calamities such as earthquakes and hurricanes, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service has typically been among the first to respond, filling the communications void left by downed telephone lines and power outages - quickly linking and coordinating relief efforts. These activities are an integral part of the purpose of Amateur Radio as defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC § 97.1(a); § 97.401(a)). Amateur Radio is very different from "C.B.": Amateur Radio operators must pass a Federal examination and be issued a Federal license, which grants them "operating privileges" - such as the right to use high power transmitters (over a thousand watts), different modes (such as voice, Morse code, and even television), and thousands of frequencies. Furthermore, those Amateur Radio operators who are members of ARES are trained in emergency communications (and related skills) and are Registered Disaster Service Workers (DSWs). Members of ARES have very diverse backgrounds - but share the common goal of assisting when called upon by their communities.

### How Does the Amateur Radio Emergency Service Assist Local Agencies?

In Washington County, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service is coordinated by the Washington County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (WCARES), serving Washington County and other groups as specified in the Washington County Emergency Plan. In the event of a disaster, ARES Emergency Responders perform a number of tasks to assist local fire, law enforcement, and other public service agencies:

- Back-Up Emergency Communications: Most public service communications today are heavily reliant upon land-line telephone, cellular telephone, and fax systems to conduct routine operations. In disasters such as earthquakes (or even power-outages), these systems fail. Subsequently, police, fire, and other public service radio channels become rapidly saturated. ARES Emergency Responders are capable of providing such agencies with a complete back-up radio communications system with many additional channels. Furthermore, ARES is capable of using radio frequencies instead of phone lines to transmit computer data (through radio modems, a.k.a. "packet radio").
- Inter-Agency Communications: Most agencies have dedicated frequencies and radios that operate only on those frequencies. ARES members can be assigned to "shadow" key people at different agencies' operations

- centers and in the field to allow inter-agency communication when the agencies are not able to communicate through normal channels. Furthermore, because of the special frequency and power-output privileges Amateur Radio Operators have, direct links can be established to locations out of range of normal public safety radios (such as Utah State OES in Salt Lake City or FEMA in Washington, D.C.).
- Health and Welfare Information: ARES members can collect and transmit health and welfare messages to the Red Cross and out-of-area family members on behalf of emergency workers and people in the community, freeing personnel to concentrate on priority matters.
  - Simulated Emergency Tests: To maintain operator skill and to develop working relationships with the agencies they serve, ARES Emergency Responders participate in various disaster drills, exercises, and related activities.
  - Community Events: In non-emergencies, ARES volunteers may assist local authorities by providing supplemental communications for various local events such as the St. George Marathon and the World Senior Games. ARES Emergency Responders also volunteer for special duty to supplement local agency operations.

### How Can I Get Involved?

The first step is to contact the Dixie Amateur Radio Club (W7DRC) and arrange to be trained to get your Amateur Radio license: E-mail: [w7drc@arrl.net](mailto:w7drc@arrl.net); Web: <http://www.dixieham.org>. The Dixie Amateur Radio Club holds meetings every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (for more information, go to <http://www.dixieham.org>).

**We need your help!** Get involved in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service today!



# Amateur Radio Emergency Service®



## ARES® Registration Form

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Call Sign:</b>	
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	
<b>City, State, ZIP code:</b>	
<b>e-mail address(es):</b>	
<b>Home phone number:</b>	
<b>Work phone number:</b>	
<b>Cell phone number:</b>	
<b>License Class:</b>	

Check bands and modes that you can operate:

MODE	HF	6 meters	2 meters	222 MHz	440 MHz	Others
SSB						
CW						
FM						
DATA						
PACKET						
Other modes (specify below)						
Mobile Operation						

Can your home station be operated without commercial power? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact ARES® and ARRL Section Leaders in your area: <http://www.arrl.org/sections/>.

Learn about ARRL-sponsored Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Courses:

<http://www.arrl.org/cce/>

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