Severe Wx Awareness Week

The state of Minnesota has conducted a Severe Weather Awareness Week in partnership with the National Weather Service and local governments for more than 20 years. The 2009 Minnesota Severe Weather Awareness Week will be observed from April 20th – 24th . This year the statewide tornado drill will be held on Thursday, April 24th.

The Severe Weather Awareness Week campaign helps teach Minnesotans about weather hazards and provides resources to minimize the risks associated with severe weather. There will be an emphasis on a different aspect of severe weather each day of the week;

Monday   –   Thunderstorms, Hail, Straight-Line Winds, Lightning
Tuesday   –   Severe Weather Warnings
Wednesday   –   Floods, Flash Floods
Thursday   –   Tornado Drill Day
Friday   –   Heat

The statewide tornado drill on Thursday will be conducted twice. Scott County will be participating in the tornado drill. The Afternoon drill will take place at 1:45 p.m. This is the time when jurisdictions across Minnesota sound their outdoor warning sirens. Schools, businesses and other facilities are encouraged to conduct a tornado drill at this time to practice their tornado sheltering plans.

The evening drill will be conducted at 6:55 p.m. The reason for a 6:55 p.m. drill is that severe weather, including tornadoes, occurs most often between 3 and 8 p.m. The statewide 1:45 p.m. drill gives institutions, first-shift and day workers a time to practice, but it does not allow second-shift workers the same opportunity. The 6:55 p.m. tornado drill also allows families to practice their sheltering plans.

You can find additional information at the MN Dept of Public Safety website at: www.severeweather.state.mn.us/

BREAK - OVER

Red River Flooding

Amateur radio operators are providing communications in support of flood relief efforts. Experienced ARES operators MUST check with W0ILO Net control by phone (701-476-4067) before doing any travel to the flooded area. The operators at this number will have the latest information on communications resources and anticipated needs. Lodging is not readily available in the area. You can check the website of the Red River Radio Amateurs at www.rrra.org for up to the minute info.

The area net is being conducted on a linked repeater system that includes Moorhead 145.350- (T123) and 444.875+ (T123) and Wheatland 147.255+ (T123). There is no HF operation at the present time.

The EOC in Cass County (Fargo) is a secure facility. Everyone will need identification to enter the area. An ARES ID card along with Driver's License are preferred.

Hams responding should at a minimum, bring a mobile radio with a good mag mount antenna and an HT. It is highly recommended that volunteers have a dual band mobile radio with cross band repeat capabilities and a dual band HT. Hams participating in dike patrol must have HTs, extra batteries, and wear blaze/hunter orange clothing suitable for the weather.

BREAK - OVER

ARES Activities
Weekly Net Monday 7 PM 146.535 mhz (s)
Breakfast Saturday, April 11th

SELECTED TRAFFIC NETS

Designator	Freq.	Local Times	
MN Phone	3.860Mhz	Noon, 5:30pm	Daily
MN CW	3.605Mhz	6:30pm, 9:50pm	Daily
ARES			
Scott ARES	146.535 S	7:00pm	Monday
Carver ARES	147.165+	8:30pm	Sunday
Bloomington	147.090+	9:00pm	Sunday
Neighboring Nets			
North Dakota	3.937Mhz	6:30pm	Daily
South Dakota	3.870Mhz	6:00pm	Daily
Wisconsin	3.985Mhz	5:30pm	Daily

Plain Language for Public Safety

The Dallas Police Department has moved to a new plain-language system that's supposed to make communications more universal and less complicated. No more of those distinctive radio codes or signals.

The department says it's following a nationwide trend, but some call it the end of an era.

Others say the switch is no big deal. Many Dallas police dispatches already include plain language because it's simple. "It's a no-brainer," Dallas Police Senior Cpl. Herb Ebsen said. "It's just common sense. If we start speaking in codes, you have a real chance for a problem or misinterpretation."

The switch became more prevalent after Sept. 11, 2001. During the terrorist attacks, different agencies had problems communicating because they used different codes or their signals had varying meanings.

Federal officials require that plain language be used during major disasters and exercises that involve several agencies or jurisdictions, according to a 2006 government alert. "There simply is little or no room for misunderstanding in an emergency situation," the alert stated.

Dallas has used a numerical signal system for several decades. A minor disturbance is a 6, while a major disturbance is a 6X. A major accident is a 7X. An officer wanting to grab something to eat? That's a 50. Got that? 10-4. (Understood.)

Dallas police acknowledge there could be a slight learning curve for some officers and dispatchers. But they don't anticipate issues, especially because the department already has practice using plain language.

When Dallas housed Hurricane Katrina evacuees, several agencies used the same radio system. So, the departments "had to take care to use terminology that we would understand," Dallas Police Lt. Chris Aulbaugh said.

In a crisis, the codes tend to go out the window, Ebsen said. "Officers who have been there a while learn pretty quickly that if something big is going on, just talk plainly to say what's going on," he said.

Michael Calhoun, a Dallas police dispatcher, said there will be some other benefits to dropping the signals: Rookies probably won't have to memorize all those codes. "It'll make their lives a whole lot easier," he said.

In the 1930s, so-called 10-codes were used to relay details quickly because police radios had only one channel, according to the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Through the years, departments developed their own unique codes or signals that were different from even neighboring agencies. So one department's 10-13 ("officer in trouble") was another department's "request wrecker."

When East Coast officers say "collar," they mean arrest, but in Nevada, officers say "rip," said Tim Dees, a retired police officer and senior editor for lawofficer.com, a law enforcement Web site. With many agencies working together, "if you use the wrong word in the wrong context, people will look at you funny," he said.

As hard as agencies try to scrub out codes and signals, it will be difficult to extinguish something that's been ingrained for decades in police forces, Dees said. "It becomes a matter of pride to use that and to know what those things mean," he said. "There's always going to be an element of jargon there. I expect you'll hear it occasionally creep back.   BREAK - OVER

Scott County ARES Contacts

Emergency Coordinator
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952-894-5178
N0BHC@arrl.net

Asst. Emergency Coordinator
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5210 West 141st Street
Savage, MN 55378
952-894-2657
W0NFE@arrl.net

Asst Emergency Coordinator
Daniel Vande Vusse N0PI
5722 West 141st Street
Savage, MN 55378
952-440-1878
N0PI@arrl.net

World Amateur Radio Day

Recognize Role In Disaster Communications

Each year on April 18, radio amateurs celebrate World Amateur Radio Day. On that day in 1925, 84 years ago, the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) was founded. In 2009, the theme of the event is Amateur Radio: Your Resource in Disaster and Emergency Communication.

"It is not by coincidence that last year's meeting of the IARU Administrative Council chose this subject at this time," said IARU International Coordinator for Emergency Communication Hans Zimmermann, F5VKP/HB9AQS. "While the Amateur Radio Service has traditionally made its contributions to emergency and disaster response ever since its very beginnings almost 100 years ago, this role has gained a lot of importance just in the recent past."

Citing the fact that natural, as well as manmade disasters are on the rise, Zimmermann pointed out that today's modern communication technologies are "increasingly complex, infrastructure-dependent and therefore also increasingly vulnerable. The Amateur Radio Service puts two equally valuable assets at its disposal for emergency and disaster prevention, preparedness and response: A large number of very flexible and mostly infrastructure-independent, local, national, regional and global networks, and a large number of skilled operators, who know how to communicate with often very limited means and to establish communications even under the most difficult circumstances."

"Telecommunications have become a commodity that society takes for granted," Zimmermann stated, adding that "the sudden loss of that service is often felt in a similar way to the loss of shelter, food and medical support. When disasters occur in regions that do not have good coverage by public networks — or when existing communications infrastructures have just been disrupted or destroyed by such events — the Amateur Radio Service comes to the rescue. Amateur Radio operators provide communications for the rescuers and relief workers and their organizations and they help to provide communications for those affected by a disaster."

Zimmermann continued: "In fact, contributions to emergency and disaster relief are a major argument for the preservation and the extension of the privileges the Amateur Radio Service enjoys in international and national regulations. This is one of the reasons why more and more Amateur Radio operators — through their clubs and their national societies — prepare very seriously for their role in

USCG To Discontinue Loran Stations

The US Coast Guard announced in February that due to economic conditions, they would be closing down the 24 LORAN-C (Long Range Aid to Navigation) stations operated under the auspices of the USCG. LORAN stations provide navigation, location and timing services for both civil and military air, land and marine users. According to the USCG, LORAN-C is approved as an en route supplemental air navigation system for both Instrument Flight Rule and Visual Flight Rule operations. The LORAN-C system serves the 48 continental states, their coastal areas and parts of Alaska.

LORAN-A stations were developed beginning in World War II, and signals were transmitted on frequencies in and around our present-day 160 meter band. LORAN-A was responsible for reduced amateur radio operations, including frequency and power limitations, on 160 meters in the United States. In 1979, the Coast Guard phased out the LORAN-A stations; they were replaced by LORAN-C stations. The newer stations operated on 100 kHz, enabling the restrictions on the 160 meter amateur band due to LORAN functions, to be dropped.

According to the Coast Guard, the nation's oldest continuous sea-going service will continue to operate the current LORAN-C system through the end of fiscal year 2009; it is in the process of preparing detailed plans for implementing the fiscal year 2010 budget. According to USCG Vice Commandant and Chief Operating Officer Vice Admiral V. S. Crea, further details of the LORAN-C termination plan will be available upon the submission of the President's full budget.

BREAK - OVER

emergencies; however, their skills can be put to use only if they are known by other first responders. Effective response to emergencies can only occur with the work of volunteers in all the various fields, from search and rescue to medical assistance and those who can provide food and shelter. Communication skills are a new, but equally vital commodity."

BREAK - OVER

Traffic Handling

Formal Message Elements – Third in a Series

Message Address, Text, and Signature

The Address

The Address section of the formal written traffic format that contains the information needed to deliver the message. Formal traffic to be delivered within the emergency net should contain the name of the individual receiving the message along with some identification of their location. For example, a shelter manager needs to send information to a manager at the EOC. The address of the message would include the following;

To: Joe Bagodonuts

Supply Coordinator

Red Cross Minneapolis Operations Center

This address contains all the information a station would need to call the net control station (NECOS) and list "1 Priority for Red Cross Minneapolis Operation Center." The NECOS would then route the traffic to the station in the net located at the Red Cross Minneapolis Operation Center. The majority of formal emergency traffic is delivered verbally directly to the addressee of their designated representative.

Formal message traffic, usually health and welfare messages, addressed to individuals outside the emergency net would be routed to the NTS (National Traffic System) through a liaison station and be delivered to the addressee. Because Health and Welfare messages are generally delivered by telephone the address information must include an accurate telephone number. Remember in an emergency situation, health and welfare traffic is handles only when there is no higher priority traffic (EMERGENCY or priority precedence.)

Message Text

The Text is the next portion of the formal written traffic format we'll examine. The text follows the Address and is preceded by the proword BREAK. The message text must be brief and accurately convey the intent of the individual originating the message. The message text is limited to a maximum of 25 words, including punctuation. The message text is ended with the proword BREAK. All the words, numbers, and punctuation between the two prowords BREAK are considered the message text. The Check is a count of words, numbers, and punctuation between the "BREAKS". The following is an example of a message text;

BREAK

NEED	TWO	OPERATORS	AND
TEN	GALLONS	GENERATOR	FUEL
XRAY	ADVISE	DELIVERY	TIME

BREAK

This sample message would have a check of 12. Notice the proword XRAY is used to represent the punctuation in the text and is counted in the check. Next month we'll take a more detailed look at the message text.

Signature

The signature is an optional part of the message. However, during emergencies, requests for material or personnel generally require the signature of the official in charge. An example would be a shelter manager's request for additional supplies due to an increase in the number of shelter clients. The signature would most likely contain the individual's title as well. For example; Fernando Lamas, Dry Gulch Shelter Manager. This example signature would be transmitted after the prowords BREAK at the end of the text. You would transmit; "BREAK signed Fernando Lamas, Dry Gulch Shelter Manager, BREAK , No More, OVER. The prowords BREAK after the signer's title marks the end of the message. The phrase "No More OVER" tells the receiving station that the entire message has been transmitted and the sending station is waiting for the receiver to ROGER the message or ask for fills.

BREAK - OVER

$mart Grid

Across

1. _____ is the use of computer and cellular technologies to remotely control basic home functions and features such as HVAC, lighting, and security systems.

9. A unit of power equal to 1000 watts. 746 kW equals one horse-power. A kW is equal to one kilojoule per second.

11. A state-of-the-art technology that enables utility companies to read electric meters remotely.

12. A reduction in the amount of electricity used by end users as a result of participation in energy efficiency programs and load management programs.

15. Electric load that corresponds to a maximum level of electric demand in a specified time period.

17. A type of utility in which the customers are also the owners.

18. Type of grid that integrates new innovative tools and tech-nologies from generation, transmission and distribution all the way to consumer appliances and equipment.

19. A program in which the utility company offers a lower rate in return for having permission to turn off the air conditioner or water heater for short periods of time by remote control. This control allows the utility to reduce peak demand.

Down

2. Those hours or periods of higher electrical demand.
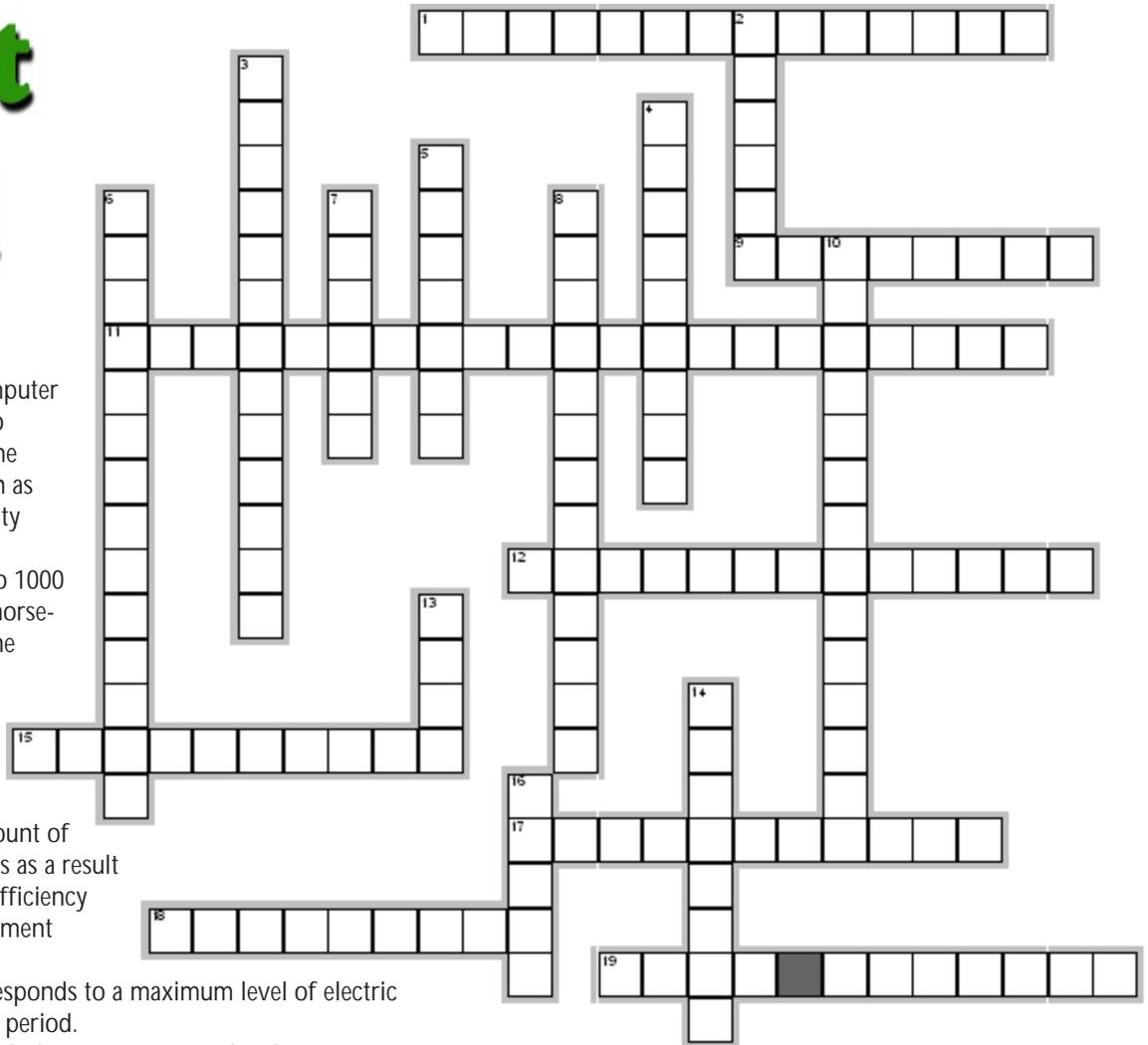
3. A privately owned utility.

4. The wireless transmission of monitoring data to indicate or record measurements at a distance from the measuring instru-ment.

5. Those hours or other periods of lower electrical demand.

6. The time period during which flow of electricity is measured (usually in 15-, 30-, or 60-minute increments.)

7. The level that electricity is delivered to users at a given point in time, measured in kilowatts.

8. type of control yhay reduces the demand of residential customers by interrupting power supply to individual appliances or equipment on customer premises.
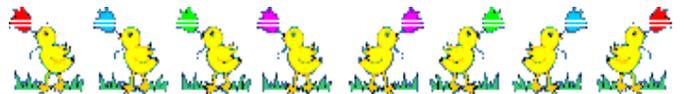
10. Steps taken to reduce power demand at peak load times or to shift some of it to off-peak times.

13. An end-use device or customer that receives power from the electric system.

14. The minimum amount of electric power delivered or required over a given period at a constant rate.

16. A system of remote control and telemetry used to monitor and control the transmission system.

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."

Carl Bard

FCC "Oops, Sorry!"

Corrects Call Sign Error

In October 2006, Peter Birk (formerly WB2DCG) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, applied for a vanity call sign, K4ZL, under the FCC's Vanity Call Sign Program. This call sign was previously held by Elmer B. Jackson, Jr of Lavergne, Tennessee. Jackson held this call sign since before 1978; it was set to expire June 11, 2008. In October 2006, the Commission received notification that Jackson had passed away February 14, 2004, so the FCC canceled his license as of this date. More than two years after the date of Jackson's death, Birk applied for and received K4ZL.

Per FCC rules pertaining to vanity call signs, certain family members and previous holders of the call sign are eligible to receive the dead person's call sign; after the two year period, the call sign is open for anyone to acquire it under the vanity call sign program.

In June 2008, Jackson notified the FCC that he was still very much alive and that he wished to renew his license. According to the FCC, based upon information they had received, "it appears that the call sign K4ZL was made available under the vanity call sign system as a result of a defective cancellation of the license originally held by Jackson. Further review determined that the information submitted to the Commission in 2006 pertained to a different person with the same name."

On Friday, March 27, Birk told the ARRL he had no idea Jackson had passed away. "There was no way for me to know that Elmer Jackson was not dead at the time I applied for K4ZL," Birk said. "In fact, the FCC believed he was dead, as well."

On March 23, the FCC released an Order Proposing Modification and concluded that cancelling K4ZL in 2006 "was defective" and that the call sign should not have been made available in the vanity call sign pool. To correct this error, the FCC "propose[s] to exchange K4ZL with the call sign previously assigned to Birk's amateur radio station, WB2DCG; and concurrently to assign call sign K4ZL back to Jackson's license, which was reinstated under call sign AJ4JT."

April 22nd
Earth Day

Quick Mental Assessment

The following was developed as a mental age assessment by the School of Psychiatry at Harvard University. Take your time and see if you can read each line aloud without a mistake. The average person over 40 years of age cannot do it!

1. This is this cat.
2. This is is cat.
3. This is how cat.
4. This is to cat.
5. This is keep cat.
6. This is an cat.
7. This is old cat.
8. This is fart cat.
9. This is busy cat.
10. This is for cat.
11. This is forty cat.
12. This is seconds cat.

Now go back and read the third word in each line from the top down and I betcha' you cannot resist passing it on.

BREAK - OVER

April Fools!

'Crossword Names' March Solution

Across
1. MAES—West and Jemison
3. LEE—Peggy or Pinky
4. EDIES—McClurg and Falco
7. DANA—Carvey or Delaney
9. LAURA—Dern or Bush
15. LEANN—Singer Rimes
17. SALS—Mineo and Maglie
18. LOCH—Lomond or Ness
19. BRIDGES—Brothers Jeff and Beau
20. PHOENIX—Brothers River and Joaquin

Down
1. MEL—Gibson or Brooks
2. SIDS—Caesar and Vicious
3. LENA—Olin of "Alias"
5. EDD—Byrnes or Hall
6. BALDWIN—Brothers Alec and William et al.
8. VALE—Crooner Jerry
10. AFFLECK—Brothers Ben and Casey
11. SARA—Poet Teasdale
12. ELIS—Whitney and Wallach
13. STARR—Belle or Bart
14. BELUSHI—Brothers John and James
16. NERO—Peter and Wolfe

Touring Mars: Old and New

MSNBC Cosmic Log

Google has upgraded its Red Planet browser to reveal fresh as well as long-faded views of Mars, marking the latest advance in a visualization revolution.

Recent add-ons for Google Earth 5.0 include a "Live From Mars" layer that incorporates the latest available imagery from NASA's Mars Odyssey spacecraft, as well as historical maps of the planet's "canali" as seen by 19th-century astronomers and guided tours that are narrated by NPR's Ira Flatow and Bill Nye the Science Guy.

This view from Google Earth's virtual Mars highlights the Red Planet's north polar ice cap.

It seems as if there's a new dose of astronomical gee-whizzery available every couple of weeks. Google unveiled its 3-D virtual Mars just last month, as part of a package that also included deep-ocean views and historical imagery.

"Our hope is that Mars becomes more than just a public science demonstration program," said Michael Weiss-Malik, a Google software engineer who took a lead role in developing the upgrade announced today. "We're hoping that NASA and other scientists use it as a primary distribution mechanism for communicating science to the public and to each other."

The "Live From Mars" layer is an example: As soon as NASA releases fresh imagery from the THEMIS thermal imager on its Mars Odyssey orbiter, those pictures will be incorporated into Google Earth's Red Planet image database.

The computer on Mars Odyssey had to be rebooted - and as a result, Google said the first "Live From Mars" images won't be quite as live as originally planned. "As soon as images start flowing again, Mars in Google Earth will be one of the first places to see them, very soon after the images are received on the ground by NASA," the company said in a statement.

BREAK - OVER

> "Never lose sight of the fact that the most important yardstick of your success will be how you treat other people."
>
> Barbara Bush

Tax Freedom Day 2009
Arrives on April 15 in Minnesota

Tax Freedom Day will arrive on April 13 this year, according to the Tax Foundation's annual calculation using the latest government data on income and taxes. Tax Freedom Day is the day when Americans finally have earned enough money to pay off their total tax bill for the year.

This is eight days earlier than in 2008, and a full two weeks earlier than in 2007, for two reasons: (1) the recession has reduced tax collections even faster than it has reduced income, and (2) the stimulus package includes large temporary tax cuts for 2009 and 2010. Nevertheless, Americans will pay more in taxes than they will spend on food, clothing and housing combined.

Tax Freedom Day answers the basic question, "What price is the nation paying for government?" An official government figure for total tax collections is divided by the nation's total income. The answer this year is that taxes will amount to 28.2 percent of our income, and the stretch of 103 days from January 1 to April 13 is 28.2 percent of the year. Income and tax data are then parsed out to the states, yielding 50 state-specific Tax Freedom Days.

In 2009, Minnesota taxpayers had to work until April 15 (ranked 9th highest nationally) to pay their total tax bill, two days after national Tax Freedom Day (April 13). The Tax Freedom Days of neighboring states were: Wisconsin, April 13 (ranked 12th nationally); Iowa, April 4 (39th nationally); North Dakota, April 1 (46th nationally); and South Dakota, March 29th (47th nationally). More information is available at the TAX Foundation website: www.taxfoundation.org/taxfreedomday.

BREAK - OVER

ARES Breakfast
Saturday April 11th
7:30AM
Perkins Restaurant
Savage, MN

NECOS Schedule April 2009

6 Apr	KB0FH Bob
13 Apr	KC0YHH Tony
20 Apr	N0PI Dan
27 Apr	W0NFE Bob
4 May	KB0FH Bob
11 May	KC0YHH Tony