



Piatt County ARES

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Introduction

This document is to set forth guidelines for the emergency operation of Piatt County ARES. It will be amended to include specific operating practices as required. Current document revisions will be made available to all members and served agencies.

Basic Information

The recognized Communications Net for Piatt County ARES operations is the Piatt County ARES/Skywarn Net that operates every Monday evening at 8:00PM local time on the KB9ZAM repeater frequency of 442.725 MHz, 103.5 Hz tone. This net meets to provide operational experience, distribute information and to promote amateur radio awareness.

During a net, all operators will be under the direction of the Net Control Station. If the net control station suddenly disappears from the system, a designee shall assume net control until the main control station returns. The Net Control Station coordinates all radio traffic into and out of the affected area of the emergency and may make allocations for "alternate" operators to move to other frequencies for liaison purposes.

If the KB9ZAM repeater is disabled, the Net Control Station will move to the K9IYP repeater frequency of 146.925 MHz, no tone. In the event that the K9IYP repeater is disabled, Net Control will operate on the KB9WEW repeater frequency of 443.575, 103.5 Hz tone.

Piatt County ARES will operate in direct contact with Piatt County ESDA on the Net Control Station frequency. In the event of severe weather, an alternate operator will maintain contact with the National Weather Service office in Lincoln via the W9BIL repeater frequency of 146.655 MHz, no tone. All alternate operators will pass traffic via Net Control. Other agencies may be designated as additional operating positions to provide emergency communications support.

Additional alternate operators may be called upon to act as liaison to the following HF nets if assistance from outside the area is required and normal communications methods are not available:

Illinois ARES Net on 3.905 MHz with W9QBH as net control
Central Illinois ARES Net on 3.905 MHz with N9FNP as net control
Illinois Sideband Net (NTS) on 3.905 MHz with WB9TVD as net control

Net Control will maintain a log of all messages with the local time received.

Activation

Piatt County ARES will be self-activating. Members should monitor the KB9ZAM repeater frequency whenever becoming aware of a possible activation event.

The KB9ZAM repeater incorporates a SAME "all hazards warning" receiver. Severe weather alerts and other emergency notices will be broadcast on the KB9ZAM repeater as they are issued.

An official of any served agency may request activation of Piatt County ARES.

The Net will not be closed until all members have checked out. This is to prevent leaving an injured member unaccounted for. A search will be conducted for any members who fail to check out of the net.

A post event gathering will be held (typically at Hardee's) to review operations and procedures. Keep all "critiques" until that time.

Be aware that the public, government officials, and the media may monitor the transmissions of the ARES Net. Conduct all operations with the highest consideration for professional operation.

If questioned by the media while operating at a served agency, refer them to the Public Information Officer of that agency.

Mobilization

Upon activation of the Piatt County ARES Net, all available ARES members should check in to the net. Any member is free to decline any assignment they are not comfortable with. If you are dispatched to a location, notify Net Control when you are in position. Tactical call signs will be issued by Net Control. When responding to activation carry ARES credentials, a copy of your amateur radio license and your drivers' license or other photo ID.

Storm Spotting

Piatt County ARES will serve to replace first responders at selected locations as soon as members are available.

It will be the policy of Piatt County ARES to have spotters in place before weather becomes too hazardous for safe travel.

Take up positions allowing easy access to escape routes. All members should carry township maps so escape routes can be planned in advance.

Do not park directly on overpasses, choose a location on either side that affords a view.

A flashing yellow light may be used when parked to warn other traffic of your presence and to prevent "Good Samaritans" from braving the elements to check on your condition.

Display a "Skywarn" decal on the back of your vehicle.

ARES members may want to obtain an orange vest or windbreaker to enhance their visibility.

Report any storm damage observed to Net Control.

In the event of serious damage after a storm, it is understood that members may wish to secure their homes and families before returning for post storm assignment.