



Welcome to the ARRL Amateur Radio Introduction to Emergency Communications Course

Preface

Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (AREC) is provided by several different types of organizations. ARES, MARS, SATERN, WX4NHC, etc. all play an important part in serving their communities. It is not the intent of this course to promote any specific group over another; rather, we encourage you to explore the many ways to serve.

At the same time, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®), sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), has a long history of public service going back to 1935, and is a program modeled by many of ARRL's sister societies. It is also the largest program and is found in almost every sector of the country. Therefore, knowledge of the ARES program, organizational structure, and the duties and responsibilities of key ARES positions is important.ham-ready.png

ARES is not an organization itself but a volunteer program of the ARRL; it consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public service when disaster or an emergency strikes. Amateur Radio (and ARRL) exists largely due to its strong foundation of volunteers. Membership in ARRL, or any other local or national organization, is not required to participate in ARES-sponsored activities. ARRL membership is, however, required for the ARES leadership appointments described in this course.

Through your commitment as an ARRL member, you support many national and local initiatives, such as ARES, and help supply local volunteers, like yourself, with the materials they need to provide excellent public service.

To learn more about ARRL and ARRL membership benefits, visit www.arrl.org.

Every year, thousands of ARES volunteers freely give their technical skills, time, and use of equipment in service to their communities. Thank you for your participation.

The field of emergency and disaster response, the communications need of our partners and the public, and the expectation from volunteer responders has changed and continues to evolve. Our traditional solution to communications problems does not always meet the needs of 21st-century emergency and disaster responders and, more important, disaster survivors. We must constantly look at how we have to adapt to meet communications needs. We hope this course will be the starting point for you in your service to your community as radio amateurs and inspire you to think outside the box and look at new and useful ways the radio amateur can lend a hand to the

public that has given us the trust of our spectrum of skills.

This is not a course that you can complete in a weekend — it is not intended to be. Students who successfully complete the course activities and receive their certificates will be better-prepared for roles in situations when lives and property are at stake. Next time, it just might be our towns and families needing help, but we will have confidence in those ARES volunteers who have completed this curriculum.

Finally, we understand that most who take this course are Amateur Radio operators who volunteer their time, skill, and equipment to provide an emergency communication resource to their community. For that, we say, “Thank you.”

ARRL Emergency Preparedness Team

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