

From: SkyWarn Announcement List ()
To: Skywarn-list@oak.powersrvcs.net
Date: Mon, April 6, 2009 7:19:12 PM
Subject: SKYWARN Newsletter #259

Hello to all..

NWS Taunton SKYWARN Training 2009 Update..
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Newsletter Issued: 4/6/09.

NWS Taunton SKYWARN Training 2009 Update..

One new SKYWARN Training session was added in Rowe, Massachusetts this week. That session has been added to the SKYWARN Training Schedule. Links to the new schedule are listed below and the entire Training Schedule has been listed again for people's convenience:

Updated SKYWARN Training Schedule 2009 links:
<http://www.wx1box.org/node/36>
<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/skywarnTraining.shtml>

The following is the current SKYWARN Training Schedule for 2009. Please check back frequently for updates on the SKYWARN Training that will be scheduled throughout this year.

Tuesday April 14th, 2009 6-9 PM:
Salem State College (North Campus)
Room TBD
Salem, Massachusetts
Sponsored by: Salem State College
Taught by: NWS Taunton Forecasters

Saturday April 18th, 2009 11 AM-2 PM:
Dexter-Southfield School - Clay Center Auditorium
20 Newton Street
Brookline, Massachusetts
Sponsored by: Brookline Emergency Management and the Dexter Southfield School and Amateur Radio Club
Taught by: Amateur Radio SKYWARN Coordinators

Thursday April 23rd, 2009 7-10 PM:

Sturdy Memorial Hospital
Rice-Webb Auditorium
Attleboro, Massachusetts
Sponsored by: Sturdy Memorial Amateur Radio Club/ARES
Taught by: Amateur Radio Coordinators

Tuesday May 5th, 2009 7-10 PM:
Cape Cod National Seashore
Salt Pond Visitor Center
Intersection of Route 6 and Nauset Road
Sponsored by: Cape Cod National Seashore and Cape Cod ARES
Taught by: NWS Taunton Forecasters

Tuesday May 12th, 2009 630-930 PM:
Spofford Fire Station
9 Pontiac Drive
Spofford, NH
Sponsored by: Cheshire County ARES and the Chesterfield/Spofford Fire
Department
Taught by: NWS Taunton Forecasters

Thursday May 14th, 2009 630-930 PM:
Rowe Elementary School
86 Pond Road
Rowe, Massachusetts
Sponsored by: Western Massachusetts SKYWARN and the Rowe School District
Taught by: NWS Taunton Forecasters

Saturday May 16th, 2009 1-4 PM:
Island Free Library
9 Dodge Street
Block Island, RI
Sponsored by: Island Free Library and Rhode Island SKYWARN
Taught by: NWS Taunton Forecasters

Monday May 18th, 2009 7-10 PM:
Morton Hospital and Medical Center - Margaret Stone Conference Room
88 Washington Street
Taunton, Massachusetts
Sponsored by: Taunton Amateur Communications Group (TACG)
Taught by: Amateur Radio Coordinators

Sessions still being looked into for the following locations:

- Woodstock, CT
- Northwest Hillsborough County NH
- Providence, RI
- Southeast Worcester county Massachusetts
- Gardner, Mass (Amateur Radio driven class)
- Blue Hill, Mass (Fall Session)
- Scituate, Massachusetts (Taught by Amateur Radio Coordinators)
- Nantucket Island

- Martha's Vineyard Island
- Western Essex County Massachusetts (Taught by Amateur Radio Coordinators)

Further SKYWARN Training Schedule updates will be posted in future SKYWARN Newsletters.

SKYWARN Self-Activates on 3/29, 4/3, and 4/6 for Thunderstorms and Poor Drainage Flooding..

Over the past week, SKYWARN was self-activated as the first thunderstorms of the season moved through the region. Here are a few brief reports on each event.

March 29th, 2009:

On March 29th, SKYWARN was self-activated as severe thunderstorms in Southeast New York and New Jersey moved into Southern New England. The storms weakened but produced small hail and estimated winds of 30-40 MPH in gusts over portions of Northern Connecticut and Western Massachusetts. Over Southeast Massachusetts, thunderstorms produced lightning and a few power outages due to lightning in the Rochester, Massachusetts area as reported by Chris Washburn-W1EAV. SKYWARN was active informally on the 145.490-Fairhaven Repeater.

Roger Jeanfaivre-K1PAI and the 146.790 Hartford-Tolland County SKYWARN Net was active informally with reports of Pea Sized Hail in Burlington, CT. Pea sized hail was also reported in Canton and Collinsville, CT as well as at Roger's location in Wethersfield, CT.

Eric Tuller-N1QKO and Ray Weber-KA1JJM activated SKYWARN in Western Massachusetts with reports of Pea Sized Hail in Westfield and Pittsfield and Peru, Massachusetts reported. The pea sized hail covered the ground in Peru, Massachusetts. SKYWARN was active informally on the 146.910-Mount Greylock and 146.940-Mount Tom Repeaters.

Thunderstorms also rumbled through portions of Northeast Massachusetts but no significant damage or hail was reported. The Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association participated in the first informal SKYWARN Net on their 145.13-Gloucester Repeater along with SKYWARN being active on the 145.470-Danvers and 146.895-Walpole Repeaters informally.

April 3rd, 2009:

On April 3rd, more embedded thunderstorms and heavy rainfall moved through the area. The thunderstorms had a number of lightning ground strikes and caused scattered power outages and hits to trees, power lines and a few

structures. SKYWARN was active informally on the 146.790-Vernon, CT and 145.470-Danvers Repeaters as the storms moved through the area. No severe criteria was met but the lightning did cause scattered damage reports in the area. Minor urban and poor drainage flooding also occurred when the heaviest rain fell but quickly receded.

As of this newsletter writing, another storm systems with heavy rainfall and embedded thunderstorms prompted another self-activation of SKYWARN for flooding and lightning related damage. Details on this self-activation will be in the next SKYWARN Newsletter.

New NHC Q & A Article for April 2009 Posted..

A new NHC Q & A Article for April 2009 is now posted. Hugh Cobb, Chief of the Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch was part of this month's Q & A. A link to this article appears below:

http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/pdf/q_and_a_200904_hugh_cobb.pdf

A link to the NHC Q & A archive is listed below:

http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/q_and_a.shtml

NOAA Web Article: NOAA Forecasters: Red River Will Crest Again in Fargo-Moorehead in Late April..

The following is a NOAA web article on the Red River floods in North Dakota:

NOAA Forecasters: Red River Will Crest Again in Fargo-Moorhead in Late April
April 3, 2009

Warming temperatures in the Red River of the North basin will begin melting ice and snowpack, setting the stage for a dangerous second crest in Fargo, N.D., and Moorhead, Minn., later this month, according to forecasters with NOAA's National Weather Service.

After using all available forecast temperature information to assess its impact on the melt of snow and ice that remains in the Red River Basin, the National Weather Service updated the outlook for the second crest at Fargo. The current National Weather Service outlook indicates a high probability (75 percent chance) of reaching or exceeding 41 feet and a 25 percent chance of reaching or exceeding 42.8 feet. This second crest currently is expected to occur in the latter half of April.

Fargo saw a March record rainfall of 4.62 inches, topping the 1882 record of 2.83 inches, and a record March snowfall of 28.1 inches, topping the 1997 record of 26.2 inches. The current winter season (2008-09) snowfall through April 3 at Fargo-Moorhead was second only to 1996-97 totals. Frigid temperatures have kept this water frozen in place, and it will begin to flow

into the river system in the coming weeks. Before the record March snowfall, water content in the region's ice and snowpack was as much as 300 percent above normal.

"The collaborative effort of local, state and federal governments to protect Fargo last week paid off, but Fargo isn't out of the woods yet," said Scott Dummer, chief hydrologist of the North Central River Forecast Center. "It's critical that we plan for the second crest now."

Several factors create a high potential for additional significant flooding in the Red River of the North basin. These factors include:

High flows. Local river levels have fallen after their recent record flows, but these drops are slowed by excessive downstream waters and the overall low-relief of the river valley, leaving a significant amount of water in the river.

Saturated and/or frozen soils. Heavy rain last fall produced saturated soils before winter freeze-up. These soils remain saturated and/or frozen to a depth of 30 inches or more, causing any spring rains or snowmelt to rapidly runoff into the river.

Widespread frozen surface water. Cold temperatures caused overland flow and local runoff to freeze on area fields. This water will quickly become runoff when the temperatures warm above freezing.

Record precipitation and recent significant snowfall. Fargo saw all-time record precipitation over the past seven months, with significant precipitation throughout the basin, particularly upstream of Fargo. The recent March 30-April 1 snow storm brought an additional 10-20 inches of snow across broad sections of the basin, which will increase runoff into the river when melting begins.

Reduced water storage. Area reservoirs are virtually full and currently have little or no additional storage capacity. Officials are releasing water from these reservoirs. Additional runoff will enhance the need for further releases.

Spring warming. An inevitable warm-up through the spring combined with the threat of additional rainfall could exacerbate the potential for rapid runoff.

Concerns still remain about the first flood wave as it continues to slowly move downstream toward Drayton. Residents can monitor local conditions online.

NOAA urges residents of Fargo-Moorhead and Red River Valley communities to continue heeding orders issued by local officials. If told to evacuate, do so immediately.

ARRL Web Story: Hams Still On Alert as Red River Flood Danger Lessens..

Please see ARRL Web Story below on Hams Still on Alert in North Dakota as Red River Flood Danger Lessens. The link complete with pictures is listed below followed by the article:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/04/06/10752/?nc=1>

On-Scene Reports from KC0SHM

March 28, 2009

We have roughly 10 VHF/UHF positions being manned 24/7 at this point -- there are zero intentions for an HF net at this time as there is substantial area outside of the immediate hot zone that will not be affected. It is unlikely that we will lose phones -- even if we did, we can reach other communities that will not lose phones via VHF/UHF.

As far as numbers of hams necessary...our needs are being met at the moment.

We may run thinner next week. However, we have a long list of names of volunteers on call that can be in the area on short notice. The volunteer support has been enormous from the ham community and I am doubtful we will need to have assistance from hams outside of ND, MN and SD.

March 29

Forgive me if my typing or spelling gets sloppy, but I am pulling a grave yard shift tonight now in my 19th hour of radio work today.

Tonight's task is at the ER of one of the local hospitals....basically here to alert the ER staff of any inbound Coast Guard helicopters should they have need to make a drop here.

Rough idea -- 25-30 local hams...30 more from out of the Fargo-Moorhead area...obviously we have been rotating people through as schedules allow and to maintain a 24 hour watch of a number of locations and allowing for our local people to deal with their homes and families when needed.

Our involvement has mostly been keeping 7-10 static stations up -- most

24/7 including two county EOCs, two hospitals (until one was evacuated as a precautionary measure).

Additionally have been manning stations at the Red Cross operations room, as well as the one shelter 20 miles out of town (our new linked repeater to that area has been great!). The West Fargo PD has been staffed along with the Coast Guard in order to provide the link necessary to relay chopper info to the hospital where I am at now.

We have been a substantial help with the Salvation Army helping coordinate food requests for those that wouldn't have otherwise been able to get food.

The bulk of our traffic has been requests pertaining to food relief efforts and all that supports it during such an event. Helping the agencies like the Salvation Army find routes that aren't flooded or passing information between agencies like the SA and Red Cross. We have also coordinated some sand bag and sand deliveries to a number volunteer filling locations on the Moorhead side of the river. We had 6 hams involved with the evacuation of Merit Care Hospital the other night.

There are over 1800 guardsman in town helping fight the flood. Short term...we are manning a handful of stations, currently with low traffic counts.

This weekend we are pretty well staffed. I understand that we have a lengthy list of volunteers that are on standby for next week and this is being coordinated by our three ECs in town.

The area (non ham but emergency management arena) is well prepared for about every scenario including mass evacuations. I am impressed with how things are going...

The good thing is that the bulk of the locations that are highest risk of a dike breach are already mostly evacuated. The call list we have will probably suffice unless this turns ugly and we need another two weeks of manning radios. Then we might need to advertise a little for more hams -- but the need will be minimal -- probably under 20 people.

March 30

At this time we have been relieved of duty at the Coast Guard (West Fargo PD) and the Innovis Hospital. It appears they now have a direct link and we are not necessary. I believe that this now leaves us only needing to staff 4 locations -- Cass and Clay County EOCs, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

We are being told that the Salvation Army is moving to 12 hour days soon. Radio traffic is continues to be light...probably less than 8 pieces of real

traffic since I got up this morning. This is excellent news for our weary hams, as it will allow us considerable wiggle room when trying to staff the locations.

It should be noted, however, that any levy breach that involves flooding in the larger areas of town will change the situation instantly and dramatically

-- so we need to be on guard for that should it occur.

The feeling in town is good -- the river continues to recede -- but the community cannot let its guard down until the river gets to a manageable 34-36 foot level, which is forecasted to be sometime this weekend.

I just heard over the repeater that a fresh batch of out of town hams arrived in town...just in time before the 8-16 inches of additional snow expected tonight, tomorrow and Wednesday. The new snow will not immediately affect the river levels -- but it will slow down the response times of people protecting the dikes.

March 31

More snow today...we have received another 7 or so inches with another 5-12 inches forecasted through tonight....Early predictions for the river are suggesting a second 41 foot crest in two weeks.

To this point all dikes will remain in place, with the exception of a few openings that may be made to allow some traffic in and out of neighborhoods currently cut off -- but that will be minimal and they can plug them back up quickly when necessary.

This break will allow the engineers to spend additional time reinforcing current dikes if they can get decent enough access to them in the snow.

Radio traffic on the net continues to be slow; we are still running 24 hours in places. Some of our out of town volunteers this week did make it in before the inclement weather. So far so good...I think we are in good shape for now and I don't expect things to change much.

The river is currently at 38.22 feet; I heard on the city commission meeting this morning that this figure is allowing the city to relax just a little bit, but they are still on extreme guard.

We received a request from the Coast Guard auxiliary for several mobile stations. (This just came over the repeater from the Clay County EOC as I was typing). Depending on what they need, it may put a little strain on us.

I am greatly impressed with everyone's cooperation, dedication and volunteerism this last week. Numerous random acts of kindness between

fellow hams at every level are occurring daily like offering shelter to our impressive amateur guests, to food for a hungry ham, and even a gentle "How are you holding up?" to those that are tired.

Our selfless giving of substantial time and talent to the greater cause of the community; at the same time as dealing with our own homes and families defines our character and ethics.

April 1

Well, it's starting to look really good for the area.

The cooler temperatures have had a major impact on the river levels by reducing the inflow from runoff and lowering the river levels -- this has all but eliminated the imminent risk to the cities of Fargo and Moorhead. There are other cities to the north of us that will still have some struggles though.

Since this event started...we have received almost 26 inches of snow -- this snow combined with the remaining runoff that hasn't made it to Fargo yet still poses a problem -- but every day we move forward the river drops, adding additional capacity to the river to accommodate it.

There is discussion of a second crest once this warms up, so unfortunately we are going to go through this one more time in a couple weeks or so. Initial forecasts for the second crest was in the neighborhood of 40-41 feet which is about where we crested last Saturday -- but the NWS has since downgraded that forecast to something commensurate to what we are experiencing today at 37 feet.

Yesterday afternoon late we moved the net to roughly 12 hour days, and dropped to only five locations. This is a huge help for staffing and we have begun turning volunteers away -- but asking that they consider being available in a couple weeks when the river starts its climb again should we start back up (which I doubt will happen).

I would like to specifically acknowledge the Minnesota area hams as well as the ND hams. The Red River is a border between ND and MN -- 50% of the area having problems was also in Minnesota, and we had a substantial number of volunteers and club members on the Minnesota side that worked just as hard.

When the flooding situation began we temporarily dissolved any separation of Fargo/Moorhead and ND/MN...operating as unified command for the community not for state or town. This allowed the flexibility to tap into radio resources from both states. During much of the event, Fargo people manned stations in Moorhead and Minnesota people manned stations in Fargo -- we really just

operated as if we were one town -- going where and when we were needed.

April 2

We are officially stopping operations tonight. The word is that a second crest, potentially commensurate to what we just had, may force us to start up the net again. Initial forecasts alluded to 40-43 feet which of course can be devastating...other forecasts suggest 37 feet, which is manageable.

The city is leaving the sandbag dikes in place, the EOC is being left "as is," including our area until there is a better grasp of the river forecast.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources.

ARRL Web Story: 2009 National Hurricane Conference Has Amateur Radio Focus..

The following is an ARRL Web Story on the 2009 National Hurricane Conference which will have several presentations on Ham Radio. The link and then article story follow below:

Web Story Link:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/03/30/10734/?nc=1>

Web Story Article Below:

The 31st Annual National Hurricane Conference will take place April 6-10 in Austin, Texas. This annual event brings together many disciplines in the Emergency Management field to address tropical events that impact the United States. According to ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, the conference will feature several Amateur Radio presentations catering to Amateur Radio operators, Emergency Management and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) officials. "This will be Amateur Radio's most significant presence at a National Hurricane Conference," Dura said.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, April 7, Dura said an Amateur Radio Training Workshop will be offered free of charge to Amateur Radio operators, Emergency Management and NGO staff and volunteers attending the Conference. "This has been a yearly tradition at the conference," he said. "In addition, on Wednesday morning, April 8, an Amateur Radio Workshop on Situational Awareness and Disaster Intelligence, as well as an Amateur Radio 'Rap Session,' will be held. For the Wednesday presentation, the conference registration fee is required."

Leaders at WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio station at the National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Watch Net, VoIP Hurricane Net and the ARRL will present various talks at the conference. In addition, Dura will give a presentation on the International Amateur Radio Support Coalition (IRESC). On Tuesday evening at 6, the Austin Amateur Radio Club will host a Texas-style BBQ. Following the dinner, several of the Amateur Radio National Hurricane Conference presenters will give their presentations to the club.

Presenters for the National Hurricane Conference and Austin Amateur Radio Club dinner and presentation include:

John McHugh, K4AG -- WX4NHC National Hurricane Center Amateur Radio Coordinator

Julio Ripoll, WD4R -- Assistant WX4NHC National Hurricane Center Amateur Radio Coordinator

Brad Pioveson, W9FX -- Hurricane Watch Net Assistant Net Manager

Robert Macedo, KD1CY -- Director of Operations for the VoIP Hurricane Net

Gregg Sarratt, W4OZK -- ARRL Southeastern Division Director

Jim Palmer, KB1KQW -- VoIP Hurricane Net Control Scheduler

The various presentations at the National Hurricane Conference will be videotaped and uploaded online through the efforts of Jim Palmer, KB1KQW, a professional videographer. Palmer also videotaped the 2008 National Hurricane Conference Amateur Radio Workshop; it is viewable online.

"This is a great event for Amateur Radio operators to understand the skill set required for mobilizing during a hurricane," Dura said. "Emergency Management and NGO officials can learn how to better utilize Amateur Radio for gathering critical disaster intelligence information and having Amateur Radio operators there when all else fails. We are looking forward to this opportunity to present to everyone at the conference."

For more information on the 2009 National Hurricane Conference, including registration information, please see the Conference Web site.

Links to various organizations and items mentioned in this web story:

National Hurricane Conference Web Site: <http://www.hurricanemeeting.com/>

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

Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center, WX4NHC:

<http://www.wx4nhc.org>

Hurricane Watch Net: <http://www.hwn.org>

VoIP Hurricane Net: <http://www.voipwx.net>

International Radio Emergency Support Coalition: <http://www.iresc.org>

Austin Amateur Radio Club: <http://www.austinhams.org>

Respectfully Submitted,

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