

NWS Taunton, MA. SKYWARN Newsletter #245

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Newsletter Issued: 11/24/2007.

Newsletter Dedicated to ARRL Letter Article Updates and SKYWARN Recognition Day...

The following SKYWARN Newsletter is dedicated to various ARRL Letter article updates and SKYWARN Recognition Day. In addition, the National Weather Service in Taunton is looking for feedback on its Regional Weather Summary product and that information is highlighted in this newsletter.

Feedback Requested on Regional Weather Summary Product...

Glenn Field, Warning Coordination Meteorologist of NWS Taunton, would like to know if people still use the Regional Weather Summary product. This product gives a simplified description of weather that occurred in the last 12 hours and what relevant weather systems will affect us in the next few days. It is easy to understand and serves as a synopsis for Weather Radio listeners at the moment. This synopsis could be derived from the Area Forecast Discussion product in the future but this is dependent on demand for the Regional Weather Summary product.

The following is a link to the Regional Weather Summary (RWS) product as supplied by NWS Taunton today:

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/productDisplay.php?product=BOSRWSBOX>

Questions we'd like to have answered by spotters are as follows:

Do you routinely read the RWS product off the Internet or listen for this on NOAA Weather Radio?

If you do listen or read this product on the Internet, do you find it useful? What parts of the summary are most useful?

Please send your responses to Glenn Field and Rob Macedo. Glenn Field's email address is glenn.field@noaa.gov. Rob Macedo's email address is rmacedo@rcn.com.

You only need to respond if you listen or read this summary product. If you don't use this product at all, you don't have to respond. Thanks in advance for your support in this survey.

SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) 2007, Saturday December 1st, 2007 0000-2400 UTC....

The National Weather Service in Taunton Amateur Radio Station, WX1BOX, will once again be active for SKYWARN Recognition Day 2007. In addition, for the second straight year, the National Weather Service Gray, Maine Office will also be active under call-sign, WX1GYX. As of this newsletter writing, the NWS Gray Maine office was still finalizing their schedule of what repeaters they will be operating on for this event.

The following is a schedule of repeaters that will be utilized along with simplex being utilized during certain timeframes on Saturday at WX1BOX. We hope Amateurs will utilize this schedule and try and work WX1BOX during these various timeframes. If you don't hear NWS, feel free to call for WX1BOX and if the office is monitoring, a response will be given. When you make contact, give your current sky condition and temperature as required. Below is the tentative schedule of operations:

Friday November 30th, 2007:

7:00-7:30 PM: 146.970-Paxton Repeater
7:30-8:00 PM: 147.180-Bridgewater Repeater
8:00-8:30 PM: 145.490-Fairhaven Repeater
8:30-9:00 PM: 146.955-Westford Repeater
9:00-9:30 PM: 146.79-Vernon, CT Repeater (linked via IRLP.)
9:30-10:00 PM: 147.225-Killingly, CT Repeater
10:00-10:30 PM: 146.760-Scituate, RI Repeater
10:30-11:00 PM: 145.470-Danvers Repeater***
11:00-11:30 PM: 146.955-Barnstable Repeater
11:30 PM-12:00 AM: 146.640-Waltham Repeater

**Will Attempt to monitor both the New England Network and the *WX-TALK*/IRLP Reflector 9219 systems during this entire timeframe.

**Will be on the Litchfield County SKYWARN system in parallel to the listed frequencies from 900-930 PM.

**It is possible we may switch off to different repeaters or simplex during time slots if we run out of contacts.

***Will attempt to make contact on that repeater as there may be issues with the reaching the repeater due to its current range.

Saturday December 1st, 2007:

7:00-9:00 AM: 146.595 Simplex
9:00-9:30 AM: 145.230-Boston Repeater
9:30-10:00 AM: 146.640-Waltham Repeater
10:00-10:30 AM: 146.895-Walpole Repeater
10:30-11:00 AM: 147.225-Killingly, CT Repeater
11:00-11:30 AM: 145.470-Danvers Repeater***
11:30 AM-Noon: 146.79-Vernon, CT Repeater (Linked via IRLP.)
Noon-2:00 PM: 146.595 Simplex
2:00-2:30 PM: 146.955-Barnstable Repeater
2:30-3:00 PM: 146.955-Westford Repeater
3:00-3:30 PM: 146.970-Paxton Repeater
3:30-4:00 PM: 147.165-Exeter, RI Repeater
4:00-4:30 PM: 146.760-Scituate, RI Repeater
4:30-5:00 PM: 145.490-Fairhaven Repeater
5:00-5:30 PM: 147.180-Bridgewater Repeater
6:00-6:30 PM: 146.895-Walpole Repeater
6:30-7:00 PM: 147.000-Dartmouth Repeater

**Will Attempt to monitor both the New England Network and the
WX-TALK/IRLP Reflector 9219 systems during this entire timeframe.

**Will be on the Litchfield County SKYWARN system in parallel to the
listed frequencies from 930-1000 AM.

**It is possible we may switch off to different repeaters or simplex
during time slots if we run out of contacts.

***Will attempt to make contact on that repeater as there may be
issues with the reaching the repeater due to its current range.

The following is information EchoLink/IRLP operations during SKYWARN
Recognition Day. Further updates to follow as we get closer to the
event:

SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) is December 1st, 2007 and EchoLink and
IRLP will be playing a role in SRD as it has in past years. SKYWARN
Recognition Day is an opportunity for National Weather Service
Forecast Offices across the United States to thank SKYWARN Spotters
for their efforts in obtaining timely severe weather reporting for
the protection of life and property. This is the SKYWARN program's
main mission.

EchoLink and IRLP are just a couple of modes people can utilize to
contact NWS offices during SKYWARN Recognition Day. Many NWS offices
will be on 2 Meters, 440 MHz, HF and other VHF/UHF bands. Details on
SKYWARN Recognition Day can be found on page 64 of the December
2007 issue of QST and can also be found at the following web page
links:

<http://hamradio.noaa.gov>

As in past years, the EchoLink *WX-TALK* Node: 7203/IRLP reflector 9219 system will be scheduling time for NWS offices in 1-2 hour time slots to act as a net control to make contacts with spotters that are on the system. If a NWS office runs out of contacts and there are other NWS offices on the system, the NWS office acting as net control can turn it over to a different NWS office to act as a net control on the system at their discretion.

We'd like to ask NWS offices to do their best to adhere to the schedule. Sometimes this is difficult due to the number of contacts received by NWS offices. We ask for everyone's patience and working cooperatively to respect the time slot schedule.

There are still some time slots open on the system for NWS offices who might be interested in acting as a net control. If you're interested, please contact Rob Macedo-KD1CY at kd1cy@voipwx.net and the time will be scheduled.

Below is the updated schedule for this year as of 11/21/07:

Time in UTC NWS Office Call-Sign

0000-0100: WX1BOX
0100-0200: WX1GYX
0200-0300: WX4MLB
0300-0400: KH6SW
0400-0500: KH6SW
0500-0600: WX9GRB (Confirmed)
0600-0700: WX4HUN
0700-0800: Open
0800-0900: Open
0900-1000: WX7PHX (Confirmed)
1000-1100: Open
1100-1200: WX6MTR
1200-1300: K0MPX
1300-1400: VE4WWO (Confirmed)
1400-1500: WX4HUN
1500-1600: WX1BOX
1600-1800: WX4NC (2 hour time slot and time slot is from last year)
1800-1900: WX0GLD
1900-2000: WX4LWX
2000-2100: WX4MLB
2100-2300: WX4NHC (2 hour time slot is from last year)
2300-2400: W4IAX (Confirmed)

There will be other conference systems utilized for SKYWARN Recognition Day. They are as follows:

The New England Reflector Gateway System will be utilized by the NWS Taunton, Mass. and NWS Gray, Maine offices from 0000-0500 UTC and 1200-2400 UTC. The New England Gateway system is on EchoLink Conference server *NEW-ENG* Node: 9123, IRLP reflector 9123. If other NWS offices would like to join the system, they are welcome to do so.

Also, it is likely that the Western Reflector will be hosting NWS offices on the Western Reflector on one of the EchoLink/IRLP gateway channels. Please contact Kent-W7AOR for specific information on the system. If we receive that information, we will update this posting to generate additional PR for their efforts.

We are looking forward to another fun SKYWARN Recognition Day on the *WX-TALK* Node: 7203/IRLP reflector 9219 system, New England Reflector Gateway system and Western Reflector system. Thanks to all for their support!

ARRL Letter Article: Amateur Radio Assist Flood Victims in Central Texas....

The following is an ARRL Letter Article on how Amateur Radio assisted flood victims in Central Texas in June 2007.

==> Amateur Radio and ARES Assist Flood Victims in Central Texas

In floods that have ravaged across central and north Texas for more than 11 days, Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) members were activated to assist those in need. In those 11 days, 11 people were killed due to the severe weather conditions. More than 10 inches of rain was predicted to fall Thursday; the area only received three inches, but more rain was expected Thursday and Friday, and flash flood warnings were in effect.

In Williamson County, north of Austin, a search has been under way for two motorists apparently swept off a road. According to the Williamson County Sherriff's office, a search was underway for a woman and her boyfriend after their car was found abandoned; the car appeared to have been swept off the road by flood waters. Almost a week of nonstop rain -- including 18 inches near Marble Falls in Burnet County, about 40 miles northwest of Austin, on Wednesday morning -- left dozens of people stranded on rooftops, cars and in trees.

According to Williamson County ARES member Tom Whiteside, N5TW, "The regular communication infrastructure has been working well, but we are participating mostly 'just in case.' We have had the Williamson County EOC staffed since Wednesday morning, and then continuously since 1 AM Thursday. In that time, we have provided communications at two shelters -- one at the Georgetown Recreational Center and one at the Liberty Hill Middle School. We are using both conventional voice and portable Winlink at the EOC. The Winlink connection is quite handy for sensitive messages, as well as for passing more complicated intelligence in and out than could be done efficiently with voice." Williamson County ARES was activated.

Jim Taylor, NQ5L, Emergency Coordinator for Williamson County, concurred. "The Williamson County EOC was opened due to the severe rains in Burnet County, with spill over into Williamson. Rain fall has slowed with several roads closed and some water rescue efforts. So far, there have been no reports of fatalities here, but people are still driving into dangerous situations." Authorities also closed several impassable roads in Williamson County. Some cars stalled in the high water, but the occupants escaped.

Saying that helicopter reconnaissance would commence during daylight hours, Taylor added that two major storm systems to the west are expected to merge and create a situation with up to 10 inches of rain expected.

A good deal of damage occurred in Marble Falls and Highland Lakes (Llano County), according to the National Weather Service and Rick Chapman, K5RIK, Emergency Coordinator for Highland Lakes. "There are extensive rains in the area, with a measured rainfall of 1.5 feet over the past 24 hours. This has resulted in many flooding situations in the low areas. Marble Falls and Kingsland were particularly hard hit. People have been forced out of their homes by the high water, and low water crossings were dangerous yesterday, with some still having high levels of water today."

Chapman added that thus far, "Our served agencies have not requested ARES/SKYWARN communications support, and we do not deploy without specific requests. With the saturated soil conditions and expected additional rainfall, our deployment status may change quickly."

The Texas National Guard dispatched troops and vehicles to Central Texas, as well as other areas hit by storms from the Oklahoma border to the Rio Grande Valley. About 150 troops and 50 vehicles were mobilized. This has been the wettest year on record in Austin, where more than 30 inches of rain has fallen since January, and Dallas-Fort Worth, Waco and Wichita Falls have near-records. The rainfall has more than compensated for a drought that much of Texas had been experiencing since 2005, the National Weather Service said.

ARRL Letter Article: Oklahoma ARES Members Assist with Floods

The following is an ARRL Letter article on how members of Oklahoma ARES assisted with Floods in July 2007.

==> Oklahoma ARES Members Assist with Floods

Due to record rainfall in June and July in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas, many rivers and streams were already swollen or flooding. On July 2, nearly 15 inches of rain fell in southern Kansas, causing widespread flooding and damage and sending torrents of floodwater downstream into northeastern Oklahoma. On July 5, the American Red Cross requested the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) to provide communications support for their damage assessment teams in those flooded areas of Northeast Oklahoma.

The Caney River, which flows through the city of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, 60 miles north of Tulsa, overflowed its banks, causing flood damage to homes and businesses within the city, as well as widespread flooding in the farm lands in other parts of Washington County. In Miami, Oklahoma, 70 miles east of Bartlesville, the Neosho River crested as it snaked in and around the community. Water up to 10 feet deep filled homes and businesses and blocked roads and highways.

ARES set up a Net Control Station, and Amateur Radio operators equipped with handheld transceivers and magnet mount antennas rode along with each Red Cross Damage assessment team as they surveyed the flood damage in Northeastern Oklahoma. An ARES Rapid Response Team (RRT) from Tulsa, led by Larry Holden, KC5KLM, began the operation and the primary group assisting with the response. Operations to survey to damage began on July 6 in Bartlesville and continued July 7 in Miami.

The ARES team used the Bartlesville Amateur Radio Club's repeater and set up a temporary repeater in Miami to aid with communications between the teams in the field and the Net Control Station. Jeff Lawson, American Red Cross team leader for the damage assessment teams, praised the ARES team's professional communication work.

ARRL Letter Article: ARRL Welcomes New Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager....

The following ARRL Letter article was on Dennis Dura-K2DCD becoming the Manager of Hurricane Preparedness and Response in late July 2007. We have dealt with Dennis-K2DCD several times over the past several months and he's already been quite helpful to SKYWARN and ARES in the region. Below are details on Dennis Dura-K2DCD's background as he continues in his new position:

==> Dennis Dura, K2DCD, Joins ARRL Staff as Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager

The ARRL is pleased to welcome Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, to the Headquarters staff in Newington. Dura's major responsibilities include addressing the development and implementation of an organizational disaster response plan as well as a continuity operations plan, complete with supporting procedures and training. Integral to these plans are the recommendations of the National Emergency Response Planning Committee (NERPC) report. Dura also will play an integral part in the management of ARES, and in future negotiations with served agencies with whom ARRL shares or creates Memoranda of Understanding.

"By instituting these base components for the organization, the emergency communications resources of Amateur Radio and the League will become truly disaster resilient on all fronts," Dura said. "Emergency communications cannot stand alone. As an organization, we must have disaster plans in place and know what we must do to continue operations when they are impacted. Without this, our support to the field will be lacking."

Dura comes to the ARRL with more than 26 years of experience in the emergency management field. He started as a volunteer coordinator in his home township's emergency management program and turned this experience and training into a consulting career, working on off-site emergency plans for nuclear power plants and the jurisdictions where they are sited around the country. At the same time, he joined the American Red Cross as a volunteer Disaster Consultant in New Jersey, leading to paid positions as Manager of Disaster Services in St Louis, Director of Disaster Preparedness in Chicago and a Disaster Preparedness Specialist in New Jersey.

After some years working in the non-governmental organization side of the field, he joined the New Jersey State Police, Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM). Dura progressed through the ranks in NJOEM and served in numerous positions such as Operations Officer and Hurricane Preparedness Officer. As a Principal Planner, he was part of the group to develop the first Terrorism Plan for New Jersey prior to 9/11, specializing in human services issues, especially Mass Care. As part of New Jersey's response to the 9/11 attack, he served on a specialized inter-governmental team to establish the Family Assistance Center at Liberty State Park.

He left NJOEM in 2003 to become the Deputy State Emergency Coordinator for the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJDHS), the position he held prior joining the League. Dura's focus in NJDHS was spread across several areas such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Mass Care and Business/Continuity of Operations.

During his time at the NJOEM, Dura was the Assistant State RACES Officer. He was also the liaison to the National Weather Service (NWS) for NJOEM and became involved in the SKYWARN program. Through a successful grant submission, he was able to secure two National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) All-Hazards Radio transmitters for unserved areas of New Jersey. His work on this project resulted in the Mark Trail Award in 2002. The Chairman of the Mt Holly NWS Forecast Office SKYWARN Advisory Committee for many years, Dennis has also been a member of his county ARES program.

Dura said he is excited to be working at ARRL Headquarters. "It is a tremendous opportunity to take my many years of emergency management experience and apply all of it to the ARRL. It wasn't a hard move [to the ARRL] at all -- take the disaster experiences and meld them with a tremendous hobby...that ends up serving the nation and the world."

Dura holds a BS in criminal justice from The College of New Jersey and is currently completing graduate level work in homeland security and emergency management. He is a Certified Business Resilience Manager and is a member of numerous professional emergency management organizations.

Dura can be reached via e-mail <k2dcd@arrl.org>.

ARRL Letter Article: Hurricane Dean Slams Caribbean Islands....

The following is the ARRL Letter article on Hurricane Dean and how the VoIP Hurricane Net and the Hurricane Watch Net assisted during this major Hurricane as Dean made its first landfall in the Caribbean Islands.

==> Hurricane Dean Slams Caribbean Islands

The VoIP Hurricane Net activated Friday morning, August 17, at 2 AM EDT/0600 UTC in response to Hurricane Dean's impact on St Lucia, Dominica, Martinique and other surrounding Caribbean islands. Reports of damage along with wind estimates and measurements were relayed to WX4NHC, the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida.

"We've received reports of wind damage. The most significant damage reports include the roof blown off of a children's hospital in Castries, St Lucia, two homes with roofs blown off and a banana plantation flattened in St Vincent. We've also had a few homes with steel roofs blown off in Trafallgua, Dominica, and a measured wind gust out of the East-Northeast of 68 knots at the Canefield Airport in Dominica," said Rob Macedo, KD1CY, Director of Operations for the VoIP Hurricane Net.

Clem James, J73CI, and Joseph Russell, J73RJ, on the island of Dominica and Julien Deider, 9Z4FZ, on the island of Trinidad have been extremely helpful in relaying reports from the affected area. They are obtaining these reports through the 75 Meter Caribbean Weather Net and through local repeater systems where operable and relaying them via EchoLink and IRLP. "We owe them a huge gratitude. They have a lot going on in their local areas yet they are relaying any information they can get to us for the benefit of the National Hurricane Center and the mission to help save lives," Macedo said.

Julio Ripoll, WD4R, Assistant WX4NHC Coordinator, manning the Amateur Radio station at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida reported that the Meteorological Office in Martinique had a measured wind gust of 88 MPH before Hurricane Center forecasters lost the phone connection to the Martinique weather office. "We need any stations that have relays into Martinique by HF or any other means to get in touch with someone there and relay reports of meteorological data and damage to the Hurricane Center," Ripoll said.

Cell phone service was knocked out to portions of the western and southern parts of Dominica as reported by Joe, J73RJ. Power and phone outages were also reported in St Lucia.

Hurricane Dean will move away from the Caribbean islands and potentially affect Jamaica and other parts of the Western Caribbean Islands. The VoIP Hurricane Net and WX4NHC secured operations at Noon EDT as Dean moved away from the islands.

"We expect to reactivate WX4NHC some time Sunday Morning for Dean as it approaches Jamaica though things could change," said Ripoll. The VoIP Hurricane Net is also preparing activation plans for Sunday. -- Thanks to Rob Macedo, KD1CY

The Hurricane Watch Net has temporarily secured operations following 6 hours of net operations for Hurricane Dean on 14.325 MHz. According to Net Manager Dave Lefavour, W7GOX, the net will resume at 2200 UTC on Saturday, August 18, and remain on the air until the band closes as the storm heads closer to Jamaica. On Sunday, the net will commence at 1200 UTC.

"We provided storm information to the affected area in the Windward Islands and passed local weather conditions and initial damage reports from the area to the National Hurricane Center in Miami as Dean moved through the islands," Lefavour reported.

"We appreciate the excellent cooperation of all amateurs in remaining clear of the frequency and allowing us to communicate with those stations in the path of Dean."

As of 1500 UTC, Friday, a hurricane warning remained in affect for Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe, and a tropical storm warning remained in effect for the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico and a number of islands in the Lesser Antilles.

A tropical storm warning and a hurricane watch has also been issued for Haiti form the Haiti/Dominican Republic border to Port-Au-Prince. A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are possible within the watch area and within 36 hours.

Hurricane Dean was located near 14.6 North, 62.6 West and it was moving toward the west at 18 knots with maximum sustained winds at 90 knots with gusts to 110 knots.

ARRL Letter Article: Hawaii Hams Heed the Call of Hurricane Flossie....

The following is an ARRL Letter Article on how Hawaii Hams reacted to the threat posed by Hurricnae Flossie in August 2007 and how the VoIP Hurricane Net assisted in this activation.

==> Hawaii Hams Heed the Call of Hurricane Flossie

The VoIP Hurricane Net activated as Hurricane Flossie approached Hawaii August 14. Flossie was at one time a Category 2 hurricane that passed 75-100 miles offshore of the Big Island of Hawaii. On Tuesday, while Flossie weakened and was downgraded to a tropical storm, tropical storm-force winds spread over Hawaii around mid-morning local time (1700-1900 UTC). If Flossie had deviated to the north, Hawaii would have been at risk for hurricane force conditions, with a change of as little as 50 miles north or south making a huge impact to the Big Island. The other islands in Hawaii were not seriously impacted.

The VoIP Hurricane Net assisted with obtaining reports from Hawaii SKYWARN and RACES and fed it back to National Hurricane Center Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, and his team at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida. The VoIP Hurricane Net uses the EchoLink Conference WX-TALK Node 7203/IRLP Reflector 9219 for its operations.

Connie McCurdy, NH7IE (using NWS Honolulu call sign KH6SW), acted as Net Control for an informal SKYWARN Net that became more formal on Tuesday as Flossie approached. "The Big Island has declared a State of Emergency, all schools are closed and many roads have been closed. The Coast Guard has ordered small vessels to return to harbor on the Big Island and large ships over 200 tons to leave. We did have an earthquake near the volcanoes, but no damage. Everything will be closed up tomorrow; folks are hunkered down to ride out the storm. Also, nine people from FEMA were sent over and arrived today just in case things turn out bad for the Big Island," she said.

She said an alert was sent out to Honolulu that high winds and rain were expected on the Big Island. "We are advised to get supplies and stand by to be called out to shelters if needed. A net will be set up on our local repeater 146.880," she said.

ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager and Assistant Director of the VoIP Hurricane Net Dennis Dura, K2DCD, said on Tuesday: "We are monitoring the activity of the VoIP Hurricane Net and the activities of ARES and RACES in Hawaii. At this time, no assistance is needed, but we will be prepared to assist the Amateur Radio community and the government of Hawaii with any communication needs."

A 5.3 earthquake also rocked the Big Island Monday evening at 7:38 local time (0038 UTC Tuesday morning) centered about 25 miles south of Hilo, according to a preliminary report from the US Geological Survey. There were no reports of injuries, structural damage or a tsunami, although the quake did cause a small landslide, according to Tom Brown, a spokesman for Hawaii County Civil Defense.

Island of Hawaii Mayor Harry Kim issued a state of emergency Monday afternoon for the volcanic island's population of 160,000. "We're taking this all very seriously," said Janet Snyder, Kim's press secretary.

The VoIP Hurricane Net activates when a hurricane affects a land area that has EchoLink and/or IRLP nodes in the affected area, and a request to activate comes from local area served agencies such as an EOC, NWS Forecast Office/SKYWARN program or the National Hurricane Center Amateur Coordinators in Miami. You may listen to VoIP Hurricane Net on one of the listen-only IRLP reflectors, which are New England IRLP Reflector 9129 and Australia IRLP Reflector 9508. The listen only EchoLink Conference is VKEMCOMM node 270177.

For more information on the VoIP Hurricane Net, visit the VoIP Hurricane Net Web page <<http://www.voipwx.net/>>. -- Some information from Rob Macedo, KD1CY

ARRL Letter Article: Dean Downgraded to a Tropical Depression, Hurricane Nets Deactivated....

An ARRL Letter article dedicated to Dean's additional impact/landfalls on Jamaica, Belize and the Yucatan of Mexico and mainland Mexico.

==> DEAN DOWNGRADED TO TROPICAL DEPRESSION, HURRICANE WATCH NET DEACTIVATED

The remnants of Hurricane Dean, now Tropical Depression Dean, have dissipated over Mexico and the heavy rain threat has diminished. The Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) secured activation for Dean on Wednesday afternoon at 1915 UTC after commencing operations last Friday. Despite experiencing very poor propagation and noisy conditions on 20 meters, the net managed to provide the latest storm advisories from the National Hurricane Center (NHC) to amateurs and listeners in Dean's path.

As the storm powered through the Windward Islands, scraped Jamaica, threatened the Cayman Islands, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and finally crossed into Mexico, HWN was in frequent contact with the affected areas to collect real-time weather data from local hams, passing it to the NHC forecasters and informing the affected areas about what to expect next via official bulletins.

On Tuesday, Dean made landfall near Costa Maya or Majahual at 0830 UTC as a potentially catastrophic Category 5 hurricane. Earlier in the week, the storm slammed Jamaica as the eye passed within 50 miles of the South Coast of Jamaica as a Category 4 hurricane. The VoIP Hurricane Net solicited reports from any stations in the affected area or any stations that have contact with the affected area.

"We received numerous reports of estimated winds over 100 MPH in Corozal, Belize, with roofs off homes, power, electricity and phone service out in many areas. Similar damage was reported in Chetmual, Mexico from a relay from Connie, NH7IE, from a friend who lives in Chetmual, Mexico," said Rob Macedo, KD1CY, Director of Operations of the VoIP Hurricane Net.

WX4NHC Assistant National Hurricane Center Amateur Radio Station Coordinator, Julio Ripoll, WD4R, worked to get reports via the VoIP Hurricane Net and liaison was established with Spanish speaking Mexican stations on the XE2MCC EchoLink conference node: 255469. Ripoll received reports directly from that conference via Spanish, and Francisco Diaz-Gonzalez, NP3OD, from the VoIP Hurricane Net Control team, is monitoring that conference for reports. "We've received reports of trees down, power outages from the Telum and Campeche, Mexico, area as relayed via the XE2MCC conference and from other amateurs," Macedo said.

A report of 16 fishermen being stranded in the Middle Keys on Jamaica was confirmed by Julien Dedier, 9Z4FZ, from Trinidad, by making contact with the Trinidad Coast Guard who then verified the report with the Jamaican Coast Guard. All 16 fishermen took shelter in a Coast Guard building on the keys and were safe. Dedier relayed numerous other damage, storm surge and wind estimate reports from Jamaica to the net. "Thanks for the update on the fishermen and were glad to know they are safe," said Ripoll.

Ray Weber, KA1JJM, from Western Massachusetts SKYWARN, and Dave Taylor, KI4YIK, from Rock Hill, South Carolina, both were instrumental in relaying measured wind data reports. Ray had a contact in Lionel Town, Jamaica, who was a mariner, and Dave had a contact with a missionary in Jamaica that had wind instrumentation that clocked sustained wind speeds. "This is an example of gathering disaster intelligence information by all means possible which is a huge role for our net. If we don't have direct contact with the affected area, getting stations that can relay from other sources from both within the Amateur community and from other contacts that Amateurs may have in the area can be of great help," Macedo said.

Between the *WX-TALK*/IRLP 9219 reflector system and the listen-only conferences, there were more than 150 connections from EchoLink PC users, as well as EchoLink and IRLP links and repeaters where people that were interested in Dean's impact on Jamaica monitored. This included relief agencies that monitored, such as the Salvation Army and the Southern Baptist Relief organization.

The Hurricane Watch Net activates on 14.325 MHz when a hurricane is forecast within 300 miles of landfall. - Information provided by HWN Manager Dave Lefavour, W7GOX, and Director of Operations of the VoIP Hurricane Net Rob Macedo, KD1CY

ARRL Letter Article: ARES Teams Activated for Northwest Ohio Near Record Flooding...

In late August, Northwest Ohio experienced near record flooding. Below is an article from the ARRL describing how Amateur Operators assisted in the flood relief efforts:

==> ARES TEAMS ACTIVATED FOR NORTHWEST OHIO NEAR-RECORD FLOODING

Heavy rains over the past week began taking their toll on Northwest Ohio communities as near record flood levels peaked on Wednesday. Ohio Amateur Radio Emergency Service District 1 was especially hard-hit in the Hancock and Seneca County areas, and a command post at the Seneca County Emergency Operations Center was activated.

The city of Findlay experienced catastrophic flooding; according to Karl Erbland, K8ARL, District Emergency Coordinator for ARRL Ohio Section - District 1, this is the worst flooding in the area since 1913. Hancock County ARES Emergency Coordinator Bill Davis, N8PTJ, activated Hancock Emergency Radio Services ARES to provide support to numerous agencies, including the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, area fire departments, American Red Cross, the Sheriff and health district departments. Two shelters were set up, with the largest taking around 250 displaced persons.

The flooding affected every area of the city. The Blanchard River's almost-100-year-old record of 18.5 feet was nearly broken by a crest reading of 18.46 feet on Wednesday afternoon.

The Hancock County hams even had to be resourceful for their own services. A few days before the major flooding began, lightning struck the Findlay Radio Club repeater site during another severe storm. Radio communication during the flood was conducted on a simplex frequency, with additional support through their 440 MHz repeater.

Reports of cell phone failures and some problems with the state's 800 MHz digital system set the stage for Amateur Radio networks help to relieve some of these shortcomings. At an information meeting held on Thursday, EMA Director Garry Valentine, N8GIL, noted that agencies should learn to count on the Amateur Radio operators in emergencies to provide communication support, and that Amateur Radio has many capabilities for communicating. "Our amateurs are always there to assist," Davis said. "We can count on them in times like these."

Communications activities included the following: relayed from Emergency Operations Center to fire departments; facilitated delivery of food and water to Jenera, Ohio residents; assisted in the rescue of two elderly ladies and two people in wheelchairs; kept County Sheriff aware of road closures; tracked rescue operations for the Red Cross; tracked displaced persons being transported to Red Cross shelter; on standby for Water Command Center and City Command Operations; relayed Health and Welfare traffic; provided telephone service to some without home phone service; relayed between Seneca County and Hancock County EMA directors, and relayed between District Emergency Coordinator and Hancock County Emergency Coordinator.

Amateurs in Seneca County were put on standby Tuesday, August 21 when word came that the Ruffing Family Care Center (south of Tiffin, Ohio) might be in danger from the rising Sandusky River, which runs near the center's property. County Emergency Coordinator Mike Klaiss, KC8BUJ, and EMA Director Dan Stahl, KC8PBU, held an on-the-air meeting with ARES officers and the McCutchenville, Ohio fire chief to review the reports and predictions from the National Weather Service in Cleveland. ARES officers remained ready through the evening and Wednesday morning. Seneca County activated the Emergency Operations Center around 7 AM on Wednesday as the Sandusky River continued to rise and affect additional areas in the county.

Seneca County EMA Director Dan Stahl said: "Hams play a big part in the emergency operations plan and in the communications center at the EOC. We intend to use all the amateurs in Seneca County during disasters like these. They provide a trained and reliable pool of communicators capable of assisting us."

Thursday brought a little relief from the rising waters but then came the rising temperatures and humidity levels. Disaster assessment was a hot job as temperatures rose to 91 degrees and similar levels of humidity. "There is a lot more to do across the entire affected area," said Erbland. "Our communities are extremely blessed to have such dedicated Amateur Radio operators. Our emphasis on ARRL communications training and the different FEMA courses such as Incident Command System and National Incident Management System is paying off. We're standing by for any needed communications as our communities recover."

ARRL Ohio Section Emergency Coordinator Frank Piper, K18GW, said, "I am extremely proud of how well the Amateur Radio operators in Hancock, Seneca and all other counties affected by the weather this past week in the Ohio Section. This is why we plan and test our communication skills and equipment on a regular basis." -- Information provided by Karl Erbland, K8ARL, District Emergency Coordinator for ARRL Ohio Section - District 1; Bob Copas, K8OIL, Hancock County Liaison/Net Control Operator, and Bill Davis, N8PTJ, Hancock County ARES Emergency Coordinator

ARRL Letter Article: Michigan Hams Activated Due to Storms and Tornado....

Michigan Amateurs responded to severe weather from an event that occurred in late August. See the ARRL Letter Article below:

==> MICHIGAN HAMS ACTIVATED DUE TO STORMS AND TORNADO

On Friday, August 24 at 5:15 PM (EDT), the National Weather Service issued a severe thunderstorm warning for Genesee County. This storm produced two tornados in the mid-Michigan area that caused severe damage to several towns. The greatest damage occurred in the City of Fenton located just south of Flint. The NWS confirmed that an EF2 tornado had touched down and had torn a path 26 miles long and up to 0.5 miles wide through Livingston, Oakland, Genesee and Lapeer County, damaging at least 250 homes and businesses. An EF2 tornado, using the Enhanced Fujita scale, is a wind estimate of 110-135 MPH in a three-second gust. More than 12,000 people lost power due to the storms.

Before the tornado hit, Michigan's Genesee County ARES and SKYWARN were activated due to a severe thunderstorm watch. The storm moved into the county with such heavy rain that visibility dropped down to zero at several points. Funnel clouds were seen in the western part of the county, but these could not be confirmed. The NWS issued a Tornado Warning based on confirmed sightings in the adjacent counties to the west, as well as reports from their Doppler radar.

As spotters continued to watch the storm, Randy Bond, N8VDS, spotted the funnel heading for Fenton and reported it to the NWS via his ham radio; Fred Moses Jr, W8FSM, confirmed the sighting. Moments later, the Genesee County 911 central dispatch center received a call that the roof on the brand new Tractor Supply Company store in Fenton had caved in and that the tornado had touched down. About half of the Fenton Community Center's roof was blown off, and debris from the building blew across the road to Fenton United Methodist Church.

Genesee County 911 called out the fire departments and activated their Fire Coordination Plan. Ham radio spotters have an agreement with Genesee County fire departments to provide supplemental communications for the departments. Hams were providing communications via the SKYWARN net and the Fire Coordination net.

As the county's fire departments started to move toward the building collapse in Fenton, hams were already on the scene. Bond and Mike Schafer, KB8RVP, shifted gears from weather spotters to Fire Coordination operators. At the request of the fire chief at the scene, Bond went to the Fenton City fire station and, using ham radio, assisted their dispatch center; the storm had damaged their radio fire communications tower, so Bond and Schafer started working dispatch for them using their ham radios until the dispatch center was able to resume normal fire communications.

Jerry Baker, KD8AYL, was next to arrive on the scene at the collapsed building and after meeting with the Incident Commander, Baker was assigned the task of setting up radio communications with more ARES volunteers in the Flint region.

As more reports of damage came in, the Fenton City and Township Fire Department became overloaded; their crippled communications tower did not help matters. ARES Emergency Coordinator for Genesee County Greg Ybarra, N8HXQ, coordinated the response during this incident and put out a call for help to District 3 Emergency Coordinator Greg Allinger, WA8OGJ. Allinger contacted other ARES units in the state, and Amateur Radio operators from nine Michigan counties responded to the Fenton area to help.

Evaluation of the damage started immediately after the storm. Baker was reassigned to a relief shelter to aid the Red Cross. What would normally have been a drive of less than 10 minutes took almost an hour due to trees and power lines down everywhere. "Trees as much as 36 inches in diameter and more than 100 years old had been ripped out of the ground by the storm; regular electric power was out and the damage reports just never seemed to end," he said.

The Genesee County Office of Emergency Management activated their Mobile Command Unit. The MCU has an Amateur Radio station in it, as well as radios for all public service organizations. The city set up a command post in the parking lot of the Fenton City fire department and began operations from there. Michigan State Police responded to the area and instituted an 8 PM curfew for everyone. State and local police set up road blocks. Access was restricted to police, fire, National Guard, Red Cross, Salvation Army or ARES.

ARES volunteers worked with all aspects of the incident. Damage reports and assessments continued until 1:30 AM Saturday when the Incident Commander determined everyone should break until 5:30 AM to get some rest.

ARRL Letter Article: Hurricane Felix Downgraded, Amateur Radio Nets Stand Down....

The following is an ARRL Letter Article on the Hurricane Watch Net and VoIP Hurricane Net efforts during Hurricane Felix in September 2007.

==> HURRICANE FELIX DOWNGRADED; AMATEUR RADIO NETS STAND DOWN

As Hurricane Felix weakened rapidly over the mountains of Central America earlier this week, both the Hurricane Watch Net and VoIP Hurricane Net secured operations. According to the National Hurricane Center, Felix could produce total rainfall accumulations of 6-10 inches across northern Nicaragua and El Salvador, with 8-15 inches over much of Honduras. Up to of 25 inches of rain was possible in mountainous areas, with these rains likely to have produced life-threatening flash floods and mud slides.

On Tuesday evening, September 4, the Hurricane Watch Net secured operations on 14.325 MHz after more than 20 hours of operation with Hurricane Felix. Initially commencing operation on Sunday evening, September 2, HWN gathered names, calls and specific locations of stations that would be able to report real-time weather conditions in the affected area and forwarded them to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. Getting this information beforehand ensured accurate reporting of a station's location when the storm actually arrived.

Two of the regular Net Control Stations -- Herman Cueva, HR1CP, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and Hector Godoy, HR3HGB, in La Ceiba, Honduras -- felt direct effects of the storm, but remained on the air available to help.

In addition to getting real-time reports of conditions in the affected area, the HWN also put out advisories in English and Spanish so that stations in the area of Felix's path could know what to expect. These reports were often relayed to the local authorities and media, since oftentimes HWN was the only source of information; all power, telephone and Internet were down. Butch Pieniek, NC4G (ex-WB4CKO), put in long hours sending out advisories in Spanish.

The Hurricane Watch Net normally commences operation when a hurricane comes within 300 miles of shore, or at the request of the NHC. It operates with designated Net Controllers who are experienced in taking these specific reports, net operations and especially working with the NHC in Miami. HWN provides the latest storm advisories in English and Spanish to those in the path of storms. The Hurricane Watch Net is a directed Net, and requests that non-member stations not in the affected area refrain from transmitting unless requested to do so by Net Control. A clear frequency is appreciated, since reporting stations in the affected area(s) may be utilizing temporary or makeshift antennas, battery power or operating under conditions that don't allow the transmission of a reasonably strong signal.

The VoIP Hurricane Net was active from 0800 UTC, standing down at 0000 UTC Tuesday, September 4, to gather reports for WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio station at the National Hurricane Center.

The President of Honduras lauded Amateur Radio on the Voice of Honduras radio station: "The President of Honduras, Senor Manuel Zelaya Rosales, says thanks to the community of radio hams for the aid." Andoni Axpe Soto, EB1FGO, and a team of translators from the International Radio Emergency Support Coalition (IRESC) brought this news to the VoIP Hurricane Net.

IRESC also relayed a report to the VoIP Hurricane Net from Nicaragua TV that 5500 homes were destroyed, 13,000 people had officially been evacuated and 38,000 total people were affected by Hurricane Felix.

WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center, monitored the VoIP Net and other systems to gather reports and information. Julio Ripoll, WD4R, Assistant WX4NHC Coordinator, said, "Felix was the second Category 5 Atlantic hurricane to make landfall as a Category 5 this year. This has never happened before in recorded history. The ham radio reports will be part of this historic hurricane's official NHC archives. WX4NHC extends its sincere thanks to all the ham radio operators from many countries and Nets for being the link between NHC and those in the path of this extremely powerful and dangerous hurricane. We hope that our continued efforts to spread the hurricane warnings will help save lives. Our thoughts and prayers are with those people who were affected by Hurricane Felix, and hope that they can rebuild their lives quickly." -- Tnx to John Ellis, NP2B, HWN Liaison to ARRL, and Rob Macedo, KD1CY, Director of Operations, VoIP Hurricane Net

ARRL Letter Article: Hurricane Humberto Causes Havoc on Gulf Coast....

The following is an ARRL Letter article on how Hurricane Humberto, which intensified in the night time hours of September 13th, 2007 caused issues along the Southeast Texas to Southwest Louisiana corridor.

==> HURRICANE HUMBERTO CAUSES HAVOC ON GULF COAST

Hurricane Humberto, a Category 1 hurricane and the first hurricane to make landfall in the US in two years, came ashore in Texas on Thursday, September 13 not even 50 miles from where Hurricane Rita hit in 2005. Stronger than initially expected, Humberto continued eastward toward Louisiana and Mississippi, where flood warnings were in effect.

In response to Humberto, several ARES groups were activated. According to Brazoria County Emergency Coordinator Terry Bowersmith, W5SRG, Brazoria County (Texas) ARES activated a complex Net at 6 PM Wednesday, involving repeaters in Freeport and Alvin. One member was dispatched to the Brazoria County Emergency Operations Center, and another to the Pearland EOC, while others remained in "standby ready condition. By 9 PM, Humberto had cleared Brazoria County with little rain and no damage, so we secured the operation," according to Bowersmith.

ARRL Louisiana Section Emergency Coordinator Gary Stratton, K5GLS, said Alan Levine, WA5LQZ, District Emergency Coordinator for Southwest Louisiana, reported minimal flood damage in his area, and little wind damage. "About three spans of power lines down in this area but should be repaired within a few hours. The weather has cleared that area and will continue along a projected path across central Louisiana and Northwest Mississippi today," Stratton said. "We were lucky that the system spawned offshore and moved inland quickly as a minimal hurricane."

Orange County (Texas) Emergency Coordinator Rocky Wilson, N5MTX, reported that as of Thursday, Orange County had a "massive power outage"; all schools are closed, as are most retail stores and businesses, until power can be restored, expected sometime on Saturday, September 15. "Most petrochemical facilities are shut down due to no power," Wilson said. Many oil refineries are located on the Texas Gulf Coast.

Humberto didn't even exist until Wednesday, only becoming a tropical storm that afternoon, strengthening from a tropical depression with 35 MPH winds, to a hurricane with 85 MPH winds in just 18 hours. Only three other storms have pulled off a similar feat, growing from depression to hurricane in 18 hours -- Blanche in 1969, Harvey in 1981 and Alberto in 1982 -- but all of them were out at sea at the time, not about to crash ashore like Humberto. A Bridge City, Texas man died when the carport at his home collapsed on him; Bridge City is between Port Arthur and Orange.

ARRL Letter Article: San Diego Area Hams Activated as Wildfires Ravage Southern California....

An ARRL Letter article on how Ham Radio Operators supported and activated for wildfires that ravaged Southern California in late October.

==> SAN DIEGO AREA HAMS ACTIVATED AS WILDFIRES RAVAGE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As fires raged through parts of the San Diego area and other areas in Southern California, ham radio operators did their part to ensure the safety of residents either affected or threatened by the fires. ARES groups in San Diego were activated on Monday, October 22 and continued to assist their served agencies until early Wednesday morning. Sixty hams were called to service by the County of San Diego's Emergency Medical Service.

According to ARRL San Diego Section Emergency Coordinator James J. Cammarano II, KG6R, hams assisted at the San Diego Medical Operations Center, six trauma centers and 16 community hospitals. Hams served as a resource, Cammarano said, "to be used in case primary circuits to hospital communications were lost due to either overload or power interruptions." In addition to these 60 amateurs, another dozen or so hams were activated by the Red Cross.

ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, learned that San Diego ARES volunteers were activated and now they are in standby mode. "They are ready to go at a moment's notice, but there are currently no plans for re-activation," he said. As in any emergency situation, information can quickly change and the ARRL will continue to monitor the situation and inform members if the situation changes.

As the fires started to spread, hams started a FIRENET on the Palomar ARC 146.73 MHz repeater. Howard White, KY6LA, of La Jolla, who was among those who served as net control operator under extremely stressful conditions, disseminated a preliminary log of his experience. Excerpts follow:

"With flames starting to engulf the county and no active single source of information, as best as I could determine Charlie NN3V stepped into the information vacuum to start the 'FIRENET' as an ad hoc operation on Sunday afternoon. Early contributors included Gayle K6GO and Gary W6GDK. Initial operations started by collecting fire information as to fire location, wind directions, shelter locations and initial evacuations. Hams provided eyes and ears on the ground where the danger was. Soon however the fires seemed to be heading down to the Poway area so Charlie and the other Poway hams needed to evacuate....

"Day One: Is the fire near us? Where is the head of the fire? What directions are the heads going? What are the winds doing? Should we evacuate? What roads are closed? What about our animals? Where should we go? What should we take? What is the route to avoid the flames? Can you help us find missing people or pets? Can you help us get barrels of water for animals? Can you help us find food and water? Can you get the police to deal with looters?

"Unlike Katrina, the questions and answers did not abate at night. It was nonstop. Terry K3PXX needed routing around the fires to evacuate his Animal trailer. Terry reported on Fires as he drove through Poway and back to San Marcos EOC. ROARS hams had evacuated Ramona and the 147.03 repeater and were looking for help to be routed safely out of the area. Fires broke out in Coronado Hills in San Marcos. People needed to be evacuated. Brian KF6C asked where to evacuate his 4 children. San Marcos EOC needed to be activated and FIRENET held the fort for them until they could get there and became operational to evacuate San Marcos. George KG6IDE tries to drive up to Ramona to evacuate elderly parents but we turn him back to avoid the flames...

"0130 Tuesday: N9XF reports flame proceeding down 76 from Fallbrook. Tom KI6IET, who is blind, but stays at his post as my backup net control, needs to be evacuated. Evacuation arranged ok. Rob WA3IHV calls from his office at Palomar hospital to tell us his family was evacuated OK and horses survived...

"2100 Tuesday: FIRENET hams drive to Qualcomm Stadium and load trucks with food. Dan leads ham relief convoy with food and supplies to Mira Costa College. Fire victims at shelter express gratitude for first food delivery...

"2350 Wednesday: KG6VVN signs off as net control as the 146.730 repeater runs out of fuel and goes off the air..."

Orange County update: Acting Section Emergency Coordinator Cathy Gardenias, K6VC, provided this update on the situation in the ARRL Orange Section as of October 25: "Slide Fire/Green Valley is 17% contained; Grass Fire is 70% contained. Santiago Canyon Fire was 50% but was reduced last night as it turned and headed for the Riverside County border of the Cleveland National Forest.

"Amateur Radio operators have been utilized. The San Bernardino County Fire EOC has been using ECS and ARES members in the EOC to monitor communications and other jobs needed. At the command post at the Rim of The World High School near Lake Arrowhead, ECS and ARES members who have been fully trained in all ICS and S190 (bush training) are handling communications and other needs. This is according to Jeff W6JJR DEC for ARES San Bernardino County and a Public Information Officer (Miles) from the EOC in San Bernardino. The EOC is at Level III at this time.

"SATERN [Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network] Amateur Radio operators at all the shelters have been volunteering their time as non communicators, but as helpers for those who are in need."

As of Friday afternoon, CNN reported that 14 of the nearly two dozen fires were under control. Nearly 800 square miles has burned in Southern California, and seven deaths have been blamed on the fires, with dozens of injuries.

Ron Roberts, Chairman of the San Diego Board of Supervisors estimates that 560,000 people were ordered to evacuate their homes, and thousands more were evacuated in San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Orange counties.

Firefighters received help from Mexico, the state and federal governments and even inmates from California's prisons. About 7000 firefighters were battling the blazes, including 2300 inmates from California's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, according to Governor Schwarzenegger.

President Bush visited the area on Thursday and declared a federal emergency for seven counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura. FEMA Administrator David Paulison said that the President's action authorizes FEMA to "coordinate all disaster relief efforts, which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population, and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives, protect property and public health and safety and lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe." Schwarzenegger estimated that at least \$75 million in federal aid would be needed. -- Some information from The Weather Channel and CNN

ARRL Letter "IN BRIEF" Article: Tornado Touches Down in Michigan, 3 Dead...

This "In Brief" article from the ARRL Letter discusses a tornadic event that affected Michigan on October 18th, 2007.

* Tornado Touches Down in Michigan, Three Dead: On October 18, a strong low pressure system centered over Minnesota touched off supercell thunderstorms throughout Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee -- all the way down to the panhandle of Florida. These storms produced about 35 tornados. Two people died in an EF-2 tornado that touched down in Williamston, Michigan around 10:30 PM EDT. Three people died as a result of the Michigan tornados. A total of seven tornado warnings issued for Ingham County with the one confirmed touchdown near Williamston. These storms also resulted in an EF3 tornado devastating the city of Nappanee, Indiana, causing extensive damage to more than 100 homes and businesses. The authorities declared a state of emergency for the city of Nappanee.

ARRL Letter Article: Remnants of Hurricane Noel Hit Northeastern US....

An ARRL Letter Article on SKYWARN's efforts right here in Southern New England when the Remnants of Hurricane Noel affected us in the form of a major nor'easter. The ARRL web article, complete with pictures can be seen at the following link:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2007/11/06/100/?nc=1>

The ARRL Letter article appears below:

==> REMNANTS OF HURRICANE NOEL HIT NORTHEASTERN US

After slamming into Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas, Noel (by then an Extratropical Storm) hit portions of Eastern New England November 3. Winds up to hurricane force caused significant tree and power line damage along with minor structural damage. The hardest hit areas were Southeast and East Coastal Massachusetts as well as Southeastern Rhode Island. Noel, which had been a Category 1 hurricane after it passed through the Bahamas, transitioned into a major "Nor'easter" system, passing less than 100 miles southeast of Nantucket Island off the coast of Massachusetts.

ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator and SKYWARN Coordinator for the National Weather Service (NWS) in Taunton, Rob Macedo, KD1CY, stated that ARES, RACES and SKYWARN groups in Eastern Massachusetts were activated Saturday morning. "Activation of SKYWARN started at 7 AM with operations at our NWS Taunton Ham Station, WX1BOX, with weather conditions deteriorating after 10 that morning." Carl Aveni, N1FY, and Phil McLaughlin, KB1CYO, assisted with operations at the NWS Taunton office.

With sustained strong winds at 25-35 MPH and gusts up to 60 MPH across Eastern and Southern Coastal Massachusetts and Southeastern Rhode Island that caused damage to trees and power lines, there were pockets of power outages across portions of the region. Conditions on Cape Cod, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard were far worse. Winds gusted well into hurricane force resulting in widespread power outages and structural damage, including damage to trees and power lines.

Cape Cod ARES District Emergency Coordinator and Cape Cod Red Cross Communications Officer Frank O'Laughlin, WQ1O, said, "I had a wind gust of 89 MPH at my home in the Marstons Mills section of Barnstable before having my anemometer ripped off the tower and blown several houses down and destroyed." Roof damage to a few structures was reported in Falmouth and Fairhaven, Massachusetts as well as Nantucket Island. The police communications tower in Harwich blew down due to the hurricane force gusts.

Roughly 10 VHF/UHF repeaters were utilized during the activation across Eastern Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Eastern Connecticut. The New England VoIP Integrated Conference system, EchoLink Node: 9123/*NEW-ENG* conference server with IRLP reflector 9123, was utilized as a command Net linking various repeaters together using the Internet. The Massachusetts State EOC, as well as Region 1 and Region 2 Offices of Massachusetts Emergency Management serving Eastern Massachusetts, were also on the system.

The National Weather Service office in Gray, Maine, WX1GYX, was also active with SKYWARN Operations for Southern Maine and Southeastern New Hampshire; the New England VoIP Integrated Conference system allowed the NWS Forecast Offices in Gray and Taunton to keep in touch. "We recently installed HF at the National Weather Service in Gray and can now have point-to-point communications with the Taunton office through this means," said Tom Berman, N1KTA, weather forecaster and SKYWARN Program Leader for NWS Gray, Maine.

Extratropical Noel moved up into the Canadian Maritimes and caused similar conditions over Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. -- Some information provided by ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator Rob Macedo, KD1CY; Connecticut SKYWARN Coordinator Steve Williams, K1SJW, and Rhode Island SKYWARN Coordinator Martin Mendelson, N1JMA

Respectfully Submitted,

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