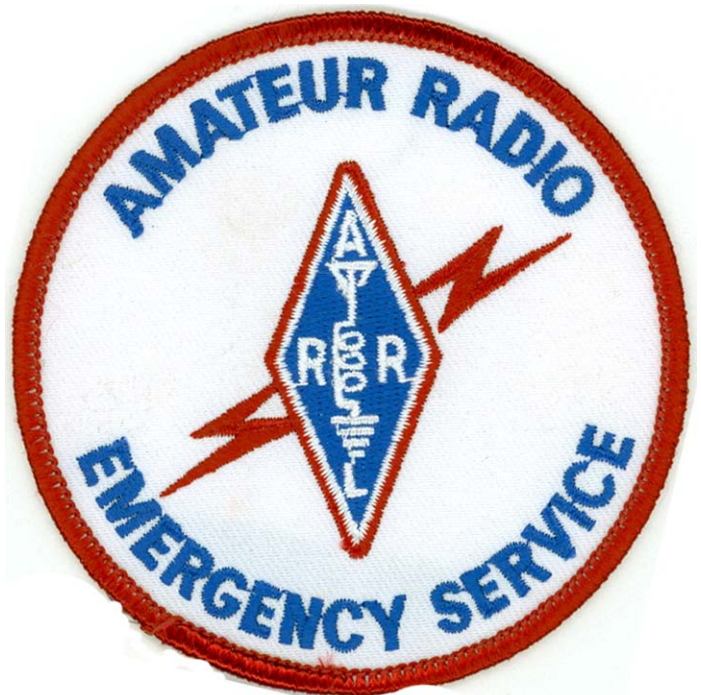


Clarke County ARES

SKYWARN NET HANDBOOK



SKYWARN



SKYWARN Net Preamble

Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch:

CQ, CQ, CQ. Calling the Clarke County Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net.

This is <name>, <call sign phonetically>, your Net Control Station. This net is being activated under Net Condition 3 due to the threat of severe weather. The National Weather Service has issued a <indicate information known about the warning issued by NWS, i.e., "tornado watch until 1515 local time">. Please review the Clarke County ARES SKYWARN Operations Plan for information on reportable weather conditions and only report according to the plan.

This is a directed net. Tactical communications will be used during this net to expedite the reporting of severe weather conditions. Tactical call signs will be used as prescribed in the SKYWARN Incident Annex.

Please do not transmit unless directed to do so by Net Control. Any emergency traffic will be handled with top priority during this net. We break now for emergency traffic. Emergency traffic only, please call <call sign>.

If you need to pass emergency traffic, please do not hesitate to notify Net Control. This net is open to anyone licensed to operate on this frequency, and participating in the National Weather Service's SKYWARN Spotter program.

Before we begin check-ins to identify available Spotters, is there anyone on frequency who would be willing to serve as Alternate Net Control? Please call <call sign>.

Is there anyone on frequency who would be willing to serve as liaison with the National Weather Service via the Georgia ARES net, the linked repeater system or via telephone, with preference to direct contact through the ARES operating positions at the National Weather Service? Please call <call sign>.

At this time we will take Spotter check-ins. If you have conditions meeting any reportable criteria, you may indicate those conditions for general information to the net. Only conditions in the Urgent or High Priority categories will be reported to the National Weather Service. Check in by giving your call sign phonetically, and location. Please call <call sign>.

Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Warning:

CQ, CQ, CQ. Calling the Clarke County Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net.

This is Clarke, <call sign phonetically>, your Net Control Station. This net is being activated at the request of the National Weather Service under Net Condition 2.

If anyone has Urgent or High Priority reportable weather conditions please call now.

(If there are reportable weather conditions, ask if there is anyone on frequency who can relay the information to the National Weather Service and handle in the most expedient way possible.)

If no response:

This is <call sign>. The National Weather Service has issued a <indicate information known about the warning issued by NWS, i.e., "severe thunderstorm warning until 1515 local time"> and has requested Spotter activation. Please review the Clarke County ARES SKYWARN Operations Plan for information on reportable weather conditions and only report conditions according to the plan or as instructed by the NCS or weather service liaison station.

This is a directed net. Please do not transmit unless directed to do so by Net Control. Tactical communications will be used during this net to expedite the reporting of severe weather conditions. Tactical call signs will be used as prescribed in the SKYWARN Incident Annex.

If you need to pass emergency traffic, please do not hesitate to notify Net Control. This net is open to anyone licensed to operate on this frequency, and participating in the National Weather Service's SKYWARN Spotter program. We will break for anyone with Urgent or High Priority reportable events. Please call <call sign>. (If so, handle as above.)

Is there anyone on frequency who would be willing to serve as liaison with the National Weather Service via the Georgia ARES net, the linked repeater system or via telephone, with preference to direct contact through the ARES operating positions at the National Weather Service? Please call <call sign>.

Is there anyone on frequency who would be willing to serve as Alternate Net Control? Please call <call sign>.

(If there is a reportable event to the county emergency management agency, ask for someone willing to relay information to Clarke County personnel.)

Periodic Announcement:

This is Clarke, <call sign phonetically>, Net Control Station. This net is operating under Net Condition <2 or 3> due to the threat of severe weather. The National Weather Service has issued a <indicate information known about the warning issued by NWS, i.e., "severe thunderstorm warning until 1515 local time">. Please review the Clarke County ARES SKYWARN Operations Plan for information on reportable weather conditions and only report according to the plan unless otherwise directed. (If Net Condition 3, add:) At this time we will take Spotter check-ins. Check in by giving your call sign phonetically, and location. Please call <call sign>.

Net Closing:

At this time, we would like to take general check-ins of stations that have not previously identified themselves. Please check in by giving your call sign phonetically, name and location. Please call <call sign>.

After all check-ins are complete:

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in this severe weather net. This concludes this emergency activation of the ARES net for severe weather activities. We wish to thank the Athens Radio Club <or name or organization supplying the repeater used> for the use of the repeater during this threat condition. This is <call sign> through the KD4QHB <or call sign of repeater> repeater closing the net at <time> hours and returning the repeater to normal operation.

More Information Concerning Condition Levels

The Increased Readiness Conditions described below are used in the operations of ARES Emergency Nets. The nets will follow these designations as a way of establishing net discipline and a way of providing more effective communications. The descriptions below are for guidance purposes. It is possible that certain situations may require the handling of various net conditions in a manner that does not exactly fit these descriptions. Such decisions are the responsibility of the Net Control Station (NCS).

Net Condition 4:

Condition 4 is the lowest level of Increased Readiness and marks a higher degree of disaster possibilities within the county. It exists to provide a presence on the frequencies and serve as a structure for potential elevation of the net into higher levels or readiness and increased net discipline. The net is conducted in a directed fashion but is open to all reports concerning weather in the area, reports of other emergency situations that may exist in a multi hazard condition, or the status of responding stations. Situation Reports (SITREPs) may be conducted during this condition.

Net Condition 3:

Condition 3 identifies the condition where situations exist that present a greater potential threat than Condition 4 to life and/or property. In weather related situations, Condition 3 is the equivalent to a National Weather Service "watch" condition. Open reporting, except in the case of emergencies or the existence of extremely dangerous conditions, is ceased. The net is conducted in a limited reporting and more highly directed fashion. The NCS will manage the net in a more highly restricted fashion with reports being taken under NCS direction only unless a true emergency exists. Instead of acting to control report taking as in Condition 4, the NCS is truly in control of the deployment and management of all communications resources that are to be used. SITREPs may be taken during this condition, but without returning the net to background operation.

Net Condition 2:

Condition 2 exists when a very hazardous situation exists that poses an immediate threat to life and/or property. In weather related situations, Condition 2 is related to a National Weather Service "warning" condition. No reports will be taken or given unless the NCS specifically requests them. The only exception to this would be the report of a situation where human life or major injury is eminent. At that time the proper Break Tag (see page A-5) should be used and all other net operations will cease. The net will resume under Condition 2 after the situation is under control. The actions the NCS will take in this condition can, in a very real way, impact the safety of those involved in the situation and impact the responsiveness of emergency services to those in need. This is why net communication is limited to only responses and requests from the NCS except in the situation described above. The NCS cannot allow random and un-requested communications to take place during this condition. Situation Reports (SITREP) may be taken during this condition, but without returning the net to background operation. No request for "Floaters" will be made.

Net Condition 1:

Condition 1 exists at a time when a major disaster has occurred. The most extreme form of net discipline is required at this time. Only the highest priority traffic or transmissions will occur. Information being handled will fit either emergency or priority classifications. The net in this condition will not handle welfare or routine traffic. Such traffic will be delayed in its handling or handled by another net set up for that express purpose. If conditions warrant, SITREPS may be requested to gather specific information as needed.

Estimating Wind Speeds

- 0 mph Smoke rises vertically
- 1-3 mph Direction of wind shown by smoke drift but not by wind vanes
- 4-7 mph Wind felt on face, leaves rustle, ordinary wind vane moved by wind
- 8-12 mph Leaves and small twigs in motion, light flags extended
- 13-18 mph Dust raised, loose paper raised, small branches move
- 19-24 mph Small leafy trees sway, crested wavelets form on lakes and ponds
- 25-31 mph Large branches in motion, whistling in telephone wires or link fences
- 32-38 mph Whole trees in motion, inconvenience felt walking against wind
- 39-46 mph Twigs break off trees, impedes progress while walking
- 47-54 mph Slight structural damage (Chimneys, shingles)
- 55-63mph Trees uprooted, widespread structural damage, mainly roofs
- 64-72mph Damage to structures major and widespread, roofs and windows damaged

Lightning Intensity

- Occasional – a couple of flashes every minutes
- Frequent – a flash every 10 seconds or so
- Continuous – flashes with few interruptions

Estimating Hail Size

- 0.125 inch BB Size
- 0.25 inch Pea Size
- 0.50 inch Dime Size
- 0.75 inch Penny Size
- 0.88 inches Nickel Size
- 1.00 inch Quarter Size
- 1.25 inches Half Dollar Size
- 1.50 inches Ping Pong Ball
- 1.75 inches Golf Ball Size
- 2.00 inches Pool Ball Size
- 2.50 inches Tennis Ball Size
- 2.75 inches Baseball Size
- 4.00 inches Grapefruit Size
- 4.50 inches Softball Size

SkyWarn Reporting Procedures

Report Briefly:

What you have seen: tornado, funnel cloud, flash flooding

Where you saw it: the direction and distance from a known location, i.e., 3 miles south of downtown Athens, near Will Hunter Road to the West of Milledge Ave. To avoid confusion, make sure you report the event location and not your location.

When you saw it: make sure you note the time of your observation.

What it was doing: describe the storm's direction and speed of travel, size and intensity, and destructiveness. Include any amount of uncertainty as needed, i.e., "funnel cloud; no debris visible at surface, but too far away to be certain it is not on ground."

Identify yourself and your location.

Report:

Tornado

Funnel Cloud

Wall Cloud – Rotation must be sustained for 5-minutes to be reportable

Hail, Dime Size or larger

Damaging winds, 50 mph or greater. Must be demonstrated by wind damage such as roof damage or large trees uprooted. Do not report uprooted trees to the NWS unless 3 have been uprooted in the area.

Peachtree NWS Phone Number: 1-866-763-4466

