



RADIO-ACTIVE!

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Disaster! Now what?



One's first response after a disaster or emergency is to be selfish. You need to assess your own safety, your family, and your neighborhood. Once these activities have been completed and determined reasonably safe then you can think about your community including ARES. But what should you do for ARES and how do you get started?

Our next ARES membership meeting is scheduled for this coming Wednesday, **March 19 at 1900**. It will be in-person at the Santa Cruz County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), at 5200 Soquel Ave, Chanticleer Entrance. There will be someone monitoring and letting people in at the door.

This month we will be reviewing our actions after a disaster/emergency. It has been a while (thankfully) and we need to dust off the protocols and review. You should plan on attending if you are unsure of the responses to the following questions:

- ▶ What is a resource net?
- ▶ What is a tactical net?
- ▶ How do I know I am activated?
- ▶ How do I get my assignment?
- ▶ What is the Emergency Reporting form?
- ▶ What is the ICS 214 form and what goes on it?



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New Ham Radio Technician License Study Group!

Do you have friends envious of your ability to talk on the radio and get information and want to learn about Ham radio? If so, we have a class for them to review the test study materials and prepare to take the exam. The study group begins Thursday, April 17th from 7:00 to 9:00pm and runs for 6 weeks at the Emergency Operations Center. Encourage your friends to sign-up soon.

Sign-up link: <https://tinyurl.com/35avzt57>

Sign-up QR code:



Equipment available to loan

Santa Cruz Communications Support have made **FOUR** kits available for loaning to allow ham operators participate in a deployment or to trial a different setup. Two kits are for a vehicle deployment and includes mobile dual-band radio, mag mount antenna, battery and kneeboard. The other two kits are for stationary outdoor deployments and includes the vehicle kit with additional supplies of a tripod antenna, lighting, and pop-up. Contact either John, N6QX, Roberta, AJ6KN, Stephen, KM6NEP or Gary, K6PDL for arrainging for check out.

Neighborhood Communications



Resilience is the ability to adapt to and recover from difficult life experiences. In Santa Cruz County, known for its ‘Disneyland of Disasters’, have many neighborhoods developing alternative methods of communications in preparation for the various disasters. Neighborhoods that are prepared for emergencies and disaster situations save lives, reduce the severity of injuries and trauma, and reduce property and environmental damage. But most important, contributing as an individual and working together with your neighbors as a team develops stronger communities and improves the quality of life in the community.

Several years ago, volunteer groups such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and ARES started figuring out how teams of volunteers (‘boots on the ground’) can efficiently and with coordination communicate when the usual methods using cellphone, telephone, power and internet may not be available. One early known assumption was not all CERT volunteers would desire to become licensed and an amateur (ham) radio operator. After an evaluation of available equipment options (MURS, GMRS, and FRS), CERT decided on the Multi-Use Radio Service, MURS, for its ease of use, portability, ability to work short distance in our varied terrains and cost. MURS uses frequencies in the 151 – 154 MHz spectrum range, the other two options use 70cm. A band plan was developed for the groups to use.

Spawning off of the CERT/ARES development and after the CZU fire nearly crippling Boony Doon, Bonny Doon Neighborhood Communications came to life (<https://www.bonnydoonradio.org/>). Its goals are two fold:

- facilitate the exchange of information within a neighborhood when normal communications are unavailable and



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Report your volunteer hours!

The reported volunteer hours for January was 504 hours. Please remember to enter your hours on the form on <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>

Reporting the time you spend on ARES and ham radio activities reminds county public safety managers that we're around and ready to serve in time of need.

Emergency References

- ▶ ARES Field Resource Manual - https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/ARES/ARESFieldResourcesManual_rev10-2019.pdf
- ▶ ARRL EmCOMM training (formerly known as EC-001): Basic and Intermediate training via the ARRL learning center
- ▶ ARRL Emergency Communications: Why Train? : https://learn.arrl.org/courses/34113/video_presentations/206804 (note, you may have to register with the ARRL Learning Center)
- ▶ The Crucial role of Amateur Radio, pg 110-112 of [SARC Communicator Journal March - April 2025](#)

Resources

- Website: <https://xczcomm.com/>
- Reporting volunteer hours: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>
- Upcoming events: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/calendar-of-events/>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ARES-of-Santa-Cruz-County-Ca-296232310799866>
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/431308973875528>
- PIO Articles: <https://arrlsantaclaravalley.org/news/> [or](#) <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/news/>
- XCZ Comm You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHZH8TUSgh4SqHTPXSWolPA>
- Submitting deployment documents: **send in PDF form to** EOC.ARES@santacruzca.gov
- Submitting personal information such as DSW application, personal data update, education certificates: email K6PDL@ARRL.net, and EOC.ARES@santacruzca.gov

Santa Cruz County ARES Purpose

- The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment with their local ARES leadership for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes
- We are not fire fighters or police or sheriff's officers. We are volunteers who care about our communities by using our emergency communication skills.
- Before volunteering in an emergency we first take care of ourselves, our family, and our home.
- We value every member's contributions, irrespective of license class, years of experience, or the price tag of equipment.

Ham Radio's Motto

"When all else fails – ham radio works". That is because, when all the normal communication systems stop working, Ham Radio is still in operation, helping people, conveying messages, and sometimes, even saving lives.

Neighborhood Communications—Continued

- relay, on an informal best-effort basis, critical emergency information between neighborhoods and authorized responding agencies when those agencies are otherwise unable to provide or obtain that information.

They have been successful in coordinating the five available MURS channels in three banks for 35 neighborhoods. And in the process of organizing, a number of inactive hams became interested again and several people found that radios are a great hobby and went on to get their amateur license to support their neighborhood. The Bonny Doon Neighborhood Communications found having radios as well as practice using them, neighbors could quickly communicate local concerns with each other and pool resources during an emergency. To this day, they continue to practice and frequently have had the opportunity to put to real use. Last week, much of Bonny Doon lost power and neighborhoods kept in touch through their MURS radios.

Ideally, multiple neighbors will be prepared with additional emergency communications gear to interact with the "outside world" during a communications outage. Such gear includes cell-phone boosters, satellite links, emergency radios, and scan-

ners. Using Neighborhood Communication, neighbors who find out what is going on can share what they learn, and neighbors who need to reach responders in the "outside world" have a better chance of doing so.

With like-minded purpose, Firewise Communities such as North Rodeo Gulch have begun asking the same questions and developing programs of neighborhood communications. However, as more groups join in, more coordination of the neighborhoods is needed.

The San Lorenzo Valley Emergency Network (www.slven.org) is a local non-profit trying to offer an educational series of how to establish a neighborhood communication group and learn what to communicate and how to be effective and efficient speaking by radio. In February, they hosted their first two-hour class to an audience of 30 community members, predominantly from various neighborhoods of the San Lorenzo Valley. Because the demand is very high, there is a repeat of the same class scheduled for Saturday, April 26th 1—3pm at Ben Lomond Fire Station with the request of no more than three persons from the same neighborhood attend. Sign-up is required through this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA9A822A4F4CE9-trunk>. Space is limited to 25.

2025 SCC ARES Events

Date	Event	Approx. or confirmed date?	Description
May 18, 2025	Strawberry Fields Forever Bike Ride	Confirmed	Strawberry Fields Forever is an annual benefit bike ride through some of the most beautiful regions of Santa Cruz County. ARES provides comms between rest stops and SAG vehicles.
June 23 - 27, 2025	Santa Cruz Regional Active Shooter and Casualty Care Response Training	Confirmed	This event is sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's department and provides first responder training for an active shooter. ARES along with CERT provides perimeter monitoring in maintaining a closed event location.
July 4, 2025	Aptos 4th of July Parade	Approximate	We provide monitoring of the public to provide information to the Sheriffs
8/17/2025 (est)	Race through the Redwoods	Approximate	Race through the Redwoods is a 10K foot race that starts and finishes at Roaring Camp but the majority traverses the redwoods in Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. It is promoted by the Felton Business and Community Association. ARES provides monitoring of runners positions and safety for the organizers.
9/21/2025 (est)	Santa Cruz Triathlon	Approximate	Santa Cruz Triathlon is a non-profit that donates proceeds to various athletic programs in the county. ARES provides monitoring of participants positions and safety for the organizers.
October 31, 2025 (est) 1530 - 2000	Halloween Trunk or Treat 5200 Soquel Ave, Santa Cruz	Approximate	Trunk of Treat is organized by the Santa Cruz Sheriffs. ARES provides monitoring of participants along with closed road staffing and shuttle parking location.

2025 Other Radio Events for Ham Operator Participation

Date	Event	Approx. or confirmed date?	Description
Each Wednesday 10am - 12pm	Loft Coffee 2701 Cabrillo College Dr, Aptos		Gathering of general interest, sharing of ideas, getting some elmer help
2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month 10am	C.A.K.E. @ Loft Coffee 2701 Cabrillo College Dr, Aptos		C.A.K.E. = Coffee/Caffeine Assisted Knowledge Exchange. Gathering of general interest, sharing of ideas, getting some elmer help
1st Saturday of each month [3/1/25, 4/5/2025, 5/3/25, 6/7/25, 7/5/25, 8/2/25, 9/6/25, 10/4/25, 11/1/25, 12/6/25] 10am - 2pm	POTA	Approximate	Play radio at a scenic park near by. Not formal and any mode can be used. Emails sent prior to event to indicate the specific park. Prior parks have been Seacliff State Park and Wilder State Park
April 10-13, 2025	Sea Otter Classic	Confirmed	World premiere Cycling festival. Ham radio operators provide communications from the Fort Ord National Monument backcountry. More information: https://sbcar.org/otter/
April 27, 2025	Big Sur International Marathon	Confirmed	Point to Point foot race/run along Highway 1 from Big Sur to Carmel. Ham radio operators provide communications along the route.
June 28-29, 2025	ARRL Field Day	Confirmed	A national activity promoted by ARRL to share all the various aspects of the Ham Radio. Often hosted by both radio clubs of the Santa Cruz County. More information to be shared at a later date.