

24 hour Radio Kit

Denton County ARES

April Training

Topics:

1. What is a 24 hour Radio Kit?
2. What should I include in my 24 hour kit?
3. What additional items could I consider adding to the kit?
4. Pitfalls and Reminders

Purpose of a 24 Hour radio kit....

When responding to an emergency event, or even a training exercise, there is a minimum set of equipment and personal gear you should bring with you to get the job done. This is intended to be ready to grab and go. You should not have to scurry around your house or shack to find your radios, batteries, cables, manuals, etc. It should be already together in a container or bag that you can simply toss in to the car and go.

The 24 hour kit with respect to amateur radio is centered on communications. You may have other grab bags for personal and family disaster response and/or evacuations. Those are also valuable and recommended. However, this training is focused on a subset of that enabling you to contribute and participate in ARES activations and deployments for emergency communications.

What Should I put in my 24 hour ARES kit?

Let's categorize the 24 hour kit contents by radio hardware, tools, and documentation.

Radio Hardware:

- 2-meter/70-cm dual band hand-held radio – programmed with the Denton ICE plan and/or DFW/Denton HRIG plan
- Dual and mag mount antenna and coax with the appropriate pigtail to connect to your radio's antenna connection (typically the pigtail converts the UHF connector on the coax to an SMA connection your radio utilizes. The pigtail can also help reduce strain on your hand-held's antenna connection. This antenna will provide the extra gain you may need with a low power handheld to reach the net repeater and/or simplex stations.
- Earphone for the hand held radio (helps in noisy environments)
- Extra Batteries for the radio – Also look for a battery adapter fitting your radio which utilizes AA or AAA batteries as a backup

Tools

- Small multimeter – Harbor freight has these for a few dollars
- Multi-tool such as a Leatherman
- Multi-tip screwdriver
- Flashlight and/or head lamp with extra batteries
- Small roll of electrical or duct tape
- Reflective Vest
- Clock or watch

Documentation

- ARES ID Badge
- ARES Field Resources Manual
- Paper and Pencil
- ARRL Message Forms
- ICS-213 Forms
- Frequency band plan
- Copy of the ICE plan

What additional items could I consider adding to the kit?

- Mobile Radio fashioned into a go kit – these can be fairly easily built to operate on battery or AC power.
- Small deep cycle battery (6 to 8 ah)
- Small solar panel to recharge deep cycle battery
- Roll up J-Pole antenna – these are made of 450ohm ladder line and can be made yourself or purchased from Internet sources.
- Small soldering iron and solder
- RF connectors and adapters
- Extra coax
- Headphone set
- Small tent
- Laptop and some sort of TNC or sound card interface for digital communications with the appropriate interface cables for your radio model

Pitfalls and Reminders

- You have to carry this, don't get carried away!!
- This is not intended for 72 hour or longer deployments. This is a 24hour kit!!
- Regularly inspect and test your kit equipment, rotate batteries, change batteries, etc.
- Do not self-deploy!! ARES activations and deployments will be requested and coordinated through your county and section ARES emergency Coordinators.

You may have additional suggestions or recommendations for a 24 hour radio go kit. Please mention these in the round-robin section of this net.

This concludes the training portion of the Denton County ARES training net. This is Your Call sign