

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



Denton County, TX

Revision 4.0

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Mission:

The mission of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service members is to provide radio communications for disaster relief efforts or when requested by local authorities. As communicators it is not our primary mission to fill sand bags, distribute food, direct traffic, etc. If net operators choose to perform such tasks, they should do so only if it does not impede their capability to provide the one service they are trained to provide: communications.

The net may be called upon to provide communications for several agencies simultaneously. While it may be argued that manpower resources of the net are not sufficient to handle all requests, it should be recognized that in the event of a major disaster, all government and volunteer agencies will be overwhelmed. Net control will make every attempt to fill requests, keeping in mind communication priorities. The operation of each net station at a high level of proficiency will greatly contribute to the amount of assistance the net can render. Proficiency in this case requires the operator to be knowledgeable not only in amateur radio, but also in the requirements, operations, and procedures of the served agency. Periodic drills are conducted to provide this knowledge and experience. The importance of participation in these drills cannot be overemphasized.

General:

In Denton County, Amateur Radio Emergency Communications are provided by a group of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed amateur radio operators committed to aiding the community in the event of a disaster by providing communications for disaster relief efforts, simulated emergencies, or other community activities that require communications.

Denton County Members work under the guidance of the American Radio Relay Leagues' Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). ARES members are trained to accurately pass traffic using the ARES protocol. Although we are called "Amateur Radio Operators" or "HAM Radio Operators" we strive to maintain a service that is recognizable as "Professional Radio Operators." As HAMs we maintain communications free of profanity, crudeness, and illegal operations. Denton County ARES accepts all regardless of race, religion, sex, or age (with one exception members must be 18 years of age or older, unless accompanied by a guardian).

Denton County officially recognizes the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, while some members may also be authorized as Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) by Local, State, and/or Federal Government Agencies. Denton County will maintain our nets as ARES. From herein the terms Emergency Communicators, Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, and Amateur Radio Emergency Service will be referred to as ARES.

An Emergency Communications net will be activated on the following occasions:

- **Request for assistance from local government authority in time of a major disaster threatening the community.**
- **Request for support from the American Red Cross (ARC) Disaster Action Chairman.**
- **Non disaster request for assistance from local government authorities.**
- **Public service communications activities.**
- **Scheduled or unscheduled net sessions.**
- **Drills called by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the Denton County Emergency Coordinator (EC), or local government.**
- **Weather conditions that require activation of the Skywarn Net.**

The net will operate under the control of the Net Control Station (NCS). The NCS will be designated upon activation by the Emergency Coordinator (EC). In the absence of the EC or regularly appointed Assistant ECs, the first station with knowledge of a condition that requires net activation will assume net control until relieved.

Member stations are asked to avoid ambulance chasing, playing police officer or otherwise interfering in the proper function of local authority. Local emergency services have adequate emergency communications equipment. The purpose of Emergency Communications is to provide additional communications as REQUESTED during disasters when these emergency capabilities are overloaded. No implication is made here that an operator should not use his/her amateur equipment in responding as a public spirited citizen to emergencies. Care should be exercised though, to neither interfere with proper authority nor imply any official status on the part of the amateur radio operator. All operators should obey traffic laws, regardless of the emergency. Do not disclose information regarding the incident to the news media. Refer news media questions to the Public Information Officer for the incident.

All net operations will be conducted in accordance with FCC Rules and Regulations Part 97. Amateur Radio Operators will conduct a professional level of service, will not operate in an environment in which they have a pecuniary interest, nor utilize Amateur Radio Frequencies in a manner that conflicts with FCC Rules and Regulations. Property or life threatening emergencies will have precedence over all other communications.

Organization:

Denton ARES is under the leadership of the Denton County ARES Coordinator (EC), EC appointed Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AEC), and Liaison Officers (LO). Denton County ARES operates under the hospices of the Denton County Emergency Services as an independent organization.

Training:

Amateur Radio Operators have passed theory examinations covering a wide range of topics including; best practices, legal and regulatory information, radio theory, basic electronics, and frequency theory. ARES leadership may have also completed Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) training including; FEMA Independent Study Courses IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, and IS-800; and may have also completed training the 300 and 400 courses offered by the Texas Engineering Extension Service or other entities.

Activation:

The Denton County Emergency Coordinator (EC) or ASSISTANT EC (AEC) will be contacted by local government officials. Activation will be accomplished by radio, telephone, pager, or mobile messenger as appropriate.

Net Operations:

Three types of nets exist in Denton County ARES; training, routine, and emergency. Each net has its own purpose.

- **Training Nets** are primarily for improving upon skills, information dissemination, and follow up to past activations.
- **Routine Nets** are used in support of events such as bike rides, walk-a-thons, and exercises. May also be used to pass health and welfare traffic, logistical information, or in supporting the aftermath of Emergency Nets.
- **Emergency Nets** are for conditions that warrant a full activation of ARES such as; Skywarn, Hurricanes, Wildfires, Evacuations, Downed Aircraft, and other property or life threatening events.

Net Control Center (NCC):

Denton County ARES/RACES has been assigned an area, the "COMM CENTER", at the Denton County EOC. The COMM CENTER can be used as the control point and fixed base for amateur radio operations in support of disaster relief efforts. If used, the COMM CENTER will be staffed by a Net Control Operator as required during disaster or potential disaster situations. If the COMM CENTER is not used, the EC or Assistant ECs will determine the most effective location for the Net Control Center. Alternatively, the NCC may be operated out of a local office such as the City of Denton EOC, City of Lewisville EOC, or any one of the mobile command centers or communication vehicles available.

Short Term Communications Need:

If ARES/RACES communications assistance is needed for only a few hours, the Net Control Center may be at or near the disaster site for easy accessibility to disaster workers and government officials.

Long Term Communications Need:

If ARES/RACES communications services are needed around the clock for several days, the Net Control Center may be set up at or near the disaster site. Operators may also be asked to provide additional equipment of their own. This depends on the severity of the disaster, and how long ARES assistance would be needed.

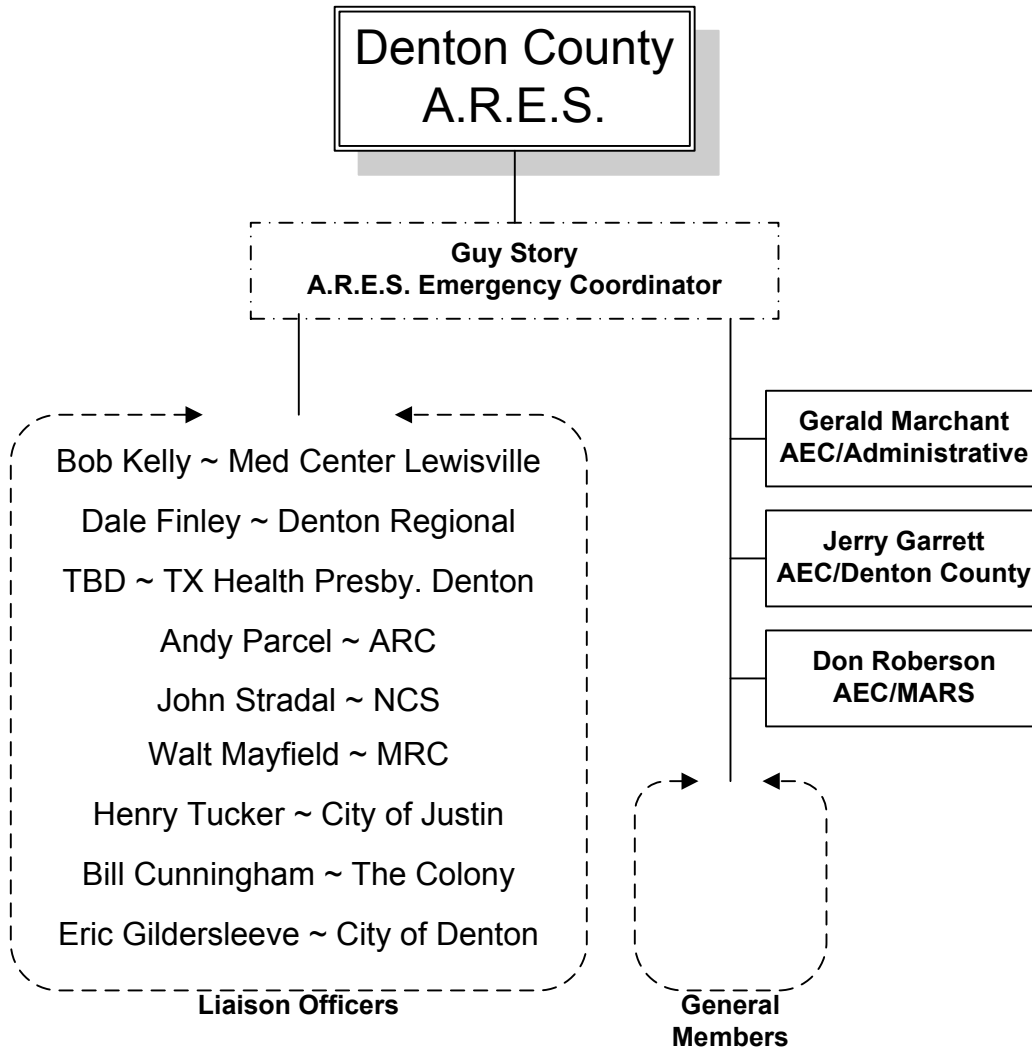
City/County Emergency Operations Center (EOC):

The North Central Texas Council of Governments and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committees recognize the City of Denton and Denton County as having full time EOC's along with Lewisville and Carrollton. Therefore, ARES/RACES communications in support of a city or county government emergency will be conducted from the COMM CENTER at the appropriate EOC. If during an emergency, the phone lines to various government agencies become unusable, the Net Control Operator will dispatch on an IMMEDIATE basis an operator to either the Denton Police dispatch center or the Denton County Sheriff's dispatch center as appropriate. The dispatched operator will take equipment capable of providing a reliable link to the COMM CENTER.

Additional Information:

Additional information may be found by visiting the Denton County ARES Website at <http://www.denton-ares.net/>, the Denton County Amateur Radio Association Website at <http://www.dcara.net/>, and the American Radio Relay League Website at <http://www.arrl.org/>. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Emergency Coordinator or one of the Assistant Emergency Coordinators.

Appendix A - Organizational Chart



Appendix B – Contact Information

<p><u>Denton County Emergency Services</u> 9060 Teasley Lane Denton, TX 76210 Main: (940) 349-2840 Dispatch: (940) 349-1620</p>	<p><u>Emergency Coordinator (EC)</u> Guy Story – KC5GOI 3821 Yellowstone Drive Denton, TX 76201 Mobile: (940) 230-4107 E-Mail: kc5goi@kc5goi.net</p>
<p><u>Assistant EC (AEC)</u> Gerald Marchant – WB5NZV 3124 Donna Road Denton, TX 76207 Mobile: (940) 391-7584 E-Mail: wb5nzv@att.net</p>	<p><u>Assistant EC (AEC)</u> Jerry Garrett – K5JLG 2059 Heather Glen Drive Lewisville, TX 75067 Mobile: (214) 674-5421 E-Mail: jerry.garrett@dentoncounty.com</p>
<p><u>Assistant EC (AEC)</u> Don Roberson – KG6LE 1027 Broome Road Bartonville, TX 76226 Mobile: (817) 903-4335 E-Mail: kg6le@peoplepc.com</p>	<p><u>City of Denton Liaison Officer (LO)</u> Eric Gildersleeve 1800 Jason Drive Denton, TX 76205 Mobile: (360) 304-0904 E-Mail: kd7cao@gmail.com</p>