



Lake County  
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service ®  
Amateur Radio Emergency Service ®  
1303 North Milwaukee Avenue  
Libertyville, IL 60048



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For Immediate Release

## Lake County is participating in National Emergency Communication Test

Libertyville, IL, June 18, 2009 – The radio room and a mobile command post at the Lake County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), part of Lake County's Emergency Management Agency, is buzzing with activity during a national emergency communication test from 1PM on Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> through noon on Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Over 34,000 ham radio operators around the country will participate in this national communication test called "Field Day", by showing off their skills and equipment to quickly assemble an operating radio station and make as many contacts around the country on various frequencies during this 24 hour period.

These days, every disaster you read about will include a story where local ham radio operators are providing emergency communications because regular phone lines are busy or down; and commercial radio systems are overloaded or not operating. These skilled radio operators are members of the federally licensed "Amateur Radio Service", which operates under the direction of the Federal Communication Commission.

Unfortunately, this year has been no different. The winter storms in the Pacific Northwest caused massive damage. The electrical power was out for days; no telephone, cell phones, and even the first responders such as the police and fire departments were out of service in many of the hardest hit areas. The same is true today where the recent Midwest flooding and tornado activity has had the same impact on local communication in Iowa, Wisconsin, Arkansas and right here in western Lake County. These communication black out areas quickly reconnect with the "outside world" as soon as the ham radio operators applied these skills, talents and abilities to get their radios on the air again.

"We hope everyone will come out to visit us during this exercise so we can show all our neighbors this isn't your grandfather's radio anymore," as Don Whitney - K9DRW, Emergency Coordinator (EC) from the Lake County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) explains. "These communication networks we're able to quickly set-up and use, can saved countless lives when phones and other systems are down. Simply put - Ham Radio Works!"

We welcome visitors to this communication exercise which is located in the Lake County Government Complex in Libertyville. Go west on Winchester Road from Milwaukee Avenue, and turn into the second drive on the right. Follow the road to the right towards the radio tower next to the building. Follow the signs to the various communication stations.



Jim Lange – KD9GY (left) talks to a station in western Washington State, while Marc Burkhart – KC9LDR logs the contact during 2008 Field Day.



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There are 654,000 licensed amateur radio operators in the U.S. today. It is one of the faster growing activities due in part that it is so reliable in times of disasters. These same ham radio volunteers also provide emergency communication to the Department of Homeland Security Citizen Corps, Salvation Army, American Red Cross, FEMA and numerous state and local agencies.

To learn more about Amateur Radio, how to earn your FCC license and learn about Emergency Communication in general go to: [www.WeDoThat-radio.org](http://www.WeDoThat-radio.org)

For more information on the Lake County Emergency Management Agency, see their website at: <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/ema>

For more information on the Lake County R.A.C.E.S. /A.R.E.S. group, please see their web site at: [www.races.org](http://www.races.org) , or by email at: [information@races.org](mailto:information@races.org)

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