



CENTRALIA AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE TEAM

SEPTEMBER, 2018

Amateur Radio is a hobby... Amateur Radio Emergency Service is a commitment!

Ramping Up For The 2018-2019 Flood Season



Seasonal flooding in Centralia is nothing new for those of us who live and work here. Every fall and winter brings flood warnings. Some years, however, are worse than others - much worse. In 1933, Tower Avenue in downtown Centralia was under three feet of flood water which lasted for nearly a week. In more modern times, we've had our share of devastating flood events as well.

Each year the Jet Stream pushes strong winter storms from the Pacific Ocean inland. Once those storms reach the Cascade Mountains, many of those storm clouds stop and with nowhere to go, simply dump their rain on western Washington. Snow melt adds to this threat in the spring. All this water can, at times, create "100 year" flood events.

1986 brought a 100 year flood event that caused massive flooding, evacuations and millions of dollars in damage. 1996's 100 year flood event closed Interstate 5 for four days and left water levels in

local businesses as high as 13 feet. The massive 2007 flood created a wall of water charging down the Chehalis River strong enough to destroy houses, carry away bridges and twist railroad tracks into pretzels. It too closed Interstate 5 for nearly a week and cost the region nearly \$166 Million. 100 year floods don't arrive on schedule every 100 years. They come with little warning and do incredible damage.

The Centralia Amateur Radio Emergency Service team was created in the aftermath of the 2007 flood. As the City of Centralia caught its breath and tried to formulate plans to meet future natural disasters of this magnitude, emergency communications became very important. How could the area response function if communications were cut? How would we connect with the Washington State Emergency Operations Center or FEMA to coordinate disaster relief efforts without basic communications? A well trained volunteer group, licensed by the FCC to operate powerful radios, and willing to support their community was the obvious answer and Centralia ARES was born.

While Centralia ARES performs many functions during local flood events, our basic job is to act as eyes in the field for the Incident Commander (IC) in the Emergency Operations Center. It is very difficult for the IC to gather a complete picture about what is happening in his community while stuck in a downtown EOC building. The ARES team, conducting street by street windshield surveys can provide that picture. As team members drive through the community, they put eyes on local water sources, known flood impact areas, flood retention barriers and neighborhood homes and businesses. All that information can be instantly relayed back in real time to the EOC from individual amateur radio operators in the field directly to the ARES operators imbedded in the Emergency Operations Center.

October is our month to prepare and train to perform this valuable job. By November, we are in flood season. During October, the ARES team will practice doing windshield surveys, training new team members and working to enhance our disaster response system. We'll be testing a new tracking system which can show where survey teams are at any time and we will be working our communications vans into new and everchanging roles as well.

September is National Preparedness Month. Are you ready, as amateur radio operators, to meet the call for service if and when it comes? Now is the time to prepare. Fall and winter storms are just around the corner.



Welcome Ken Adams, KK6YUQ



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Centralia Amateur Radio Emergency Services welcomes Ken Adams, KK6YUQ, as its newest team member. Ken was born and raised in Orange, California and has been married to his wife Kathy for 25 years. They have a 21 year old son who lives in California and a 19 year old daughter attending Seattle University. Ken and Kathy moved to the Chehalis area in August of this year.

Ken became a Police Explorer with the Orange Police Department at age 14 and was hired at a part-time Police Cadet at 16. He became a Reserve Police Officer at age 19, finally being hired as a full-time Police officer with Orange PD at 22, attending the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Academy.

Ken's assignments included patrol, CSI, Field Training Officer, Special Enforcement Detail and the Gang Unit. In 1994 he transferred to the Traffic Unit as a Motorcycle Officer, spending 20 years working collision investigation/reconstruction, DUI team, commercial vehicle enforcement and traffic investigation/felony follow-ups. Ken retired in December 2014 but remained with the department as a Reserve Police Officer until July 2018. He has taught at the Golden West Police Academy in Huntington Beach, California teaching Hazardous Materials First Responder Awareness and Emergency Scene Management in Unusual Occurrences.

Ken earned his Ham Radio license in 2015. Besides amateur radio, he enjoys RVing with Kathy, and woodworking. He is eager to learn and experience fishing and hunting in the Pacific Northwest. Welcome aboard, Ken. We look forward to working with you.

Riverside Fire Authority Quarterly Amateur Radio Tests



Riverside Fire Ham Pete Stoeckler, WA2PPG operating RFA Station #6's amateur radio.

Riverside Fire Authority, one of Centralia ARES' served agencies, participates in the Lewis County Community District Command ham radio system which tests amateur radios located in most fire stations county wide.

Each quarter, the entire radio system is tested in a one hour exercise requiring each fire station equipped with ham radios to check in to both a local repeater system and a simplex frequency.

The exercise begins on the Baw-Faw repeater for a quick roll call and then switches to a simplex frequency for yet another roll call to see which stations can hear each other across Lewis County.

Riverside Fire Authority has a large number of their personnel,

both paid and volunteers, who are licensed amateurs radio operators, including Chief Mike Kytta, KG7GQT.

Centralia ARES volunteers participate alongside the RFA fire hams at each exercise. While the fire hams usually operate the radios during the test, the ARES hams are there to support and assist them if needed. It is also a great way for both ARES and Riverside Fire hams to get to know each other and become familiar with each of the Riverside Fire stations that surround our community.

Flood Windshield Survey Training Exercise



Lyle, KB7PI and John, AD6KT handling comms during the recent flood windshield survey exercise. Photo by Paul, KE7PCB

Flood season is approaching quickly now that the warm summer weather has passed. For several of our newest ARES team members, dealing with localized flooding is something they have not yet experienced.

Our recent training was designed to demonstrate just how a flood windshield survey works.

Comm II with a team leader and a radio operator deployed into the community. Seven survey teams were given area assignments within the four Emergency Response Divisions. The EOC radios were up and running and

two APRS field tracking teams were out testing the APRS-droid system once again and making sure the test tracks were visible on the EOC and Comm II computers.

In the dark and in the rain, the teams did a great job surveying their assigned areas. All tests of the APRSdroid system worked perfectly and there were some great tracks to show for their efforts. Comm II, as a communications hub between the survey teams and the EOC proved very successful and alleviated much of the radio chatter into the already noisy EOC. These volunteers do GREAT work!