



**Amateur Radio operators establish and operate organized communication networks locally for governmental and emergency entities, as well as non-commercial communication for citizens affected by disasters. They are very active after disasters that often damage regular lines of communications due to power outages and destruction of telephone, cellular and other infrastructure-dependent systems.**

**Many radio amateurs are active volunteers with local public safety organizations. In some disasters, radio frequencies are not coordinated among relief officials. Amateur Radio operators step in to coordinate communication when radio towers and elements in the communications infrastructure are damaged.**

**Amateur Radio operators have informal and formal groups to coordinate communication during emergencies. At the local level, hams participate in local emergency organizations, and organize local "traffic nets" using VHF (very high frequencies) and UHF (ultra high frequencies). At the state level, hams are often involved with state emergency management operations. Hams operate at the national level through the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), which is coordinated through FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and through the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), which is coordinated through the American Radio Relay League and its field volunteers. Ham operators participate in Skywarn, under the auspices of the National Weather Service to provide emergency weather information.**

**Many national organizations have formal agreements with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and other Amateur Radio groups including:**

- **Department of Homeland Security -- Citizen Corps**
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**
- **National Communications System (NCS)**

- **Salvation Army (SATERN)**
- **National Weather Service**
- **Association of Public Safety Communications Officials**

**We are fortunate at 4 Seasons to have a radio club, W6FSB, which comprises an aggregate of experienced radio communicators. The club consists of seasoned licensed Amateur Radio operators, state-of-the-art ham radio equipment and community volunteers utilizing FRS (Family Radio Service) radio communication. Club members traditionally have their own equipment that can be used during disasters or emergencies and may consists of base, mobile, field, or hand held transceivers. We have been active in establishing radio communication protocol, processes, procedures for the 4 Seasons at Beaumont Emergency Preparedness Program. The club also is behind the effort of establishing the use of FRS radios in the community for emergencies, neighborhood watch reporting, and general recreational use. Club volunteers also provide FRS training and familiarization, operation, and use of the radio. The FRS training by qualified W6FSB instructors is open to all interested organizations, clubs or individuals. – Alfred Blair, KK6IGU**