



Chicagoland Skywarn

Issue 1. Volume 1

June 2009

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- Introduction of our Organization
- WXSpots
- 2009 Atlantic Hurricane Season

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Welcome new members and readers! Do you have some news or would you like to write an article for our newsletter? We're looking for authors! Contact Mike at aa9vi@arrl.net

Our Group's Mission

By Mike Swiatkowski, AA9VI

Hello there! This is the first newsletter by our brand new organization. Chicagoland Skywarn was started by a group of amateur radio operators last winter.

Chicagoland Skywarn is a group of amateur radio operators, emergency coordinators, meteorologists, and weather spotters in the Chicago metropolitan area. The purpose of this group is to promote

severe weather awareness, organize training opportunities, and most importantly, to act as a bridge of information from the many Skywarn, ARES, and RACES groups in our area. Our goal is to promote communication and goodwill between existing ham groups in the area, not to replace any of them.

Check into our website for many neat features including current weather, maps, forecasts, training

aids, and subscribe to our private email distribution list. We hope to have quarterly meetings to discuss our goals in the very near future so stay tuned!

We're a work in progress and always looking for new members and new ideas.

Weather "or-not"

By George Geotsalitis, NB9R

Recently my rain gauge registered 1.75" over a 24 hour period. I got to thinking about where all this rain water goes (depending on where you're at in the Chicago metro area). I decided to look into the 191 acres of farmland that developers took and converted into the largest shopping center in the Chicago

metro area. In doing so, they needed to remove rainwater build-up from the rooftops and pavement into a convenient repository. What they chose was **Salt Creek**. One and three quarter's inch of rainfall over an acre weighs in at 396,000 lbs, times 191 acres, equals 75,636,000 lbs. Total water weight divided by 8.34 lbs/gallon yields a result of 9.1 million gallons of water

being introduced into Salt Creek for every 1 3/4" of rain falling on the **Woodfield Shopping Center**.

Gearing up for Storm Season with WX Spots!

By Mike Swiatkowski, AA9VI

Did you know there is free software out there where you can share your storm reports with other local amateur radio operators? It's called WX Spots and it's available at www.wxspots.com.

Wx Spots is not meant to replace the traditional Skywarn FM repeater or e-Spotter reports you

have been giving to the National Weather Service, since they don't use WX Spots. It's just a neat way to see what others are seeing in your area.

WX Spots is a great internet-based reporting tool, but we aren't using it that much in Chicagoland...yet. So, we're encouraging many of you to get on board with the FREE software and start submitting reports

during severe weather. One of the nice things about WX Spots is that it keeps an automated, historical record of recent observations. You can submit your report and others will be able to see it if they sign in later on.

Help others be "storm ready" with your over the air reports and WX Spots!



Join the Citizen Weather Observer Program today! More details at: www.wxqa.com

Digital TV and Your Local Weather

By Mike Swiatkowski, AA9VI

Did you know that you can get the latest weather for FREE over the air 24 hrs a day/ 7 days a week? WMAQ NBC-5 features Weather Plus on WMAQ DT 5-2. NBC-5's Weather Plus cycles the current weather and 7 day forecast for local weather reporting sites throughout Chicagoland.

WLS, ABC-7 also has its own version of 24/7 weather on WLS-DT 7-3. ABC-7's Weather also features national forecasts from Accu-Weather.

Both stations have live radar shots every few minutes which are a great way to track a line of storms headed our way.

If you don't have a digital ATSC receiver or digital to analog converter box, now

is the time. Analog TV signs off on June 12th.

These 24/7 TV WX stations are also available on AT&T U-Verse, and Comcast cable. Check your local channel guide if you subscribe to these providers.



Being Ready for the Big Storm!

By Mike Swiatkowski, AA9VI

The newest weather radios can receive text message advisory, watch, and warnings. You can program these weather radios to sound an audible alarm or not.

The Midland WR-300 weather radio includes the 7 NOAA weather radio frequencies and an AM/FM radio. The weather radio has the best receiver I have seen among comparable weather radios. This

receiver absolutely blows away anything from Radio Shack. Unfortunately, the AM/FM receiver only is only average, at best.

Below is the SAME# for your county so you can program your weather radio.

Weather Radio and SAME Codes for Your Area

<i>County</i>	<i>SAME #</i>	<i>Transmitter</i>	<i>Frequency (MHz)</i>
Cook	17031	Chicago	162.55
		Crystal Lake	162.5
		Lockport	162.425
DuPage	17043	Chicago	162.55
		Lockport	162.425
		Plano	162.4
Grundy	17063	Lockport	162.425
		Odell	162.45
		Plano	162.4
Kane	17089	Crystal Lake	162.5
		DeKalb	162.55
		Lockport	162.425
		Plano	162.4
Kendall	17093	Lockport	162.425
		Plano	162.4
Lake, IL	17097	Crystal Lake	162.5
		Racine	162.45
McHenry	17111	Crystal Lake	162.5
		Racine	162.45
Will	17197	Kankakee	162.525
		Lockport	162.425
		Odell	162.45
		Plano	162.4
Lake, IN	18089	Chicago	162.55
		Hebron	162.45
		Kankakee	162.525
		Lockport	162.425
Porter, IN	18127	Chicago	162.55
		Hebron	162.45
Kenosha, WI	55059	Crystal Lake	162.5
		Racine	162.45
		Milwaukee	162.4

Skywarn Repeater Update

By George Geotsalitis,
NB9R

As the current Skywarn/Emergency Communications Coordinator for the Du Page Amateur Radio Club (DARC) and a member of Cook and DuPage County ARES, I've had a great deal of frustration because I have no real understanding as to how other counties conduct severe weather activities. As most of you no doubt have, I've found several pieces of existing information and while a lot of it agrees too much of it is conflicting (or just plain wrong).

Speaking personally, I'm convinced that a global understanding of what goes on in all of the 23 Counties under Romeoville (LOT) auspice, can (will) help

ARES groups and Hams (in general) as they travel through unfamiliar counties during severe weather and also give the amateur radio community a "big picture" look at its involvement in severe weather tracking and reporting.

I sent an email to who I presumed were the "principals" for each repeater involved with an attached questionnaire. Guessing that this was not the first time they'd been asked to provide this kind of information, I apologized for the redundancy. I do plan on updating the matrix annually, so this should be considered a "work-in-progress."

As I was creating the questionnaire, I decided that simply gathering the repeater frequency and

PL was not enough. As a result, the respondents provided not only the "basics" but also city locations, backup repeaters (as they exist), simplex "backup" channels, IRLP and Echolink node and training information. I also got particulars on several other (adjacent county) repeaters and an entire "complex of interconnected repeaters that are not generally used during Skywarn operations but are available as needed. All of this along with contact information has be forwarded to the National Weather Service and posted on the DARC Skywarn site at: <http://skywarn.w9dup.org> under the Navigation Button – "Skywarn

"Speaking personally, I'm convinced that a global understanding of what goes on in all of the 23 Counties under Romeoville (LOT) auspice can (will) help."

Spotter Etiquette – How You Can Help Net Control

By Mike Swiatkowski,
AA9VI

I have been asked to mention a few notes about Spotter etiquette. Although I am not net control on any of the spotter frequencies in the area, I ask that we can all make net control's job easier.

First, you should never just "let people know you're out there." Only

contact net control if you have severe weather to report. Otherwise you may be unnecessarily tying up the frequency when someone has a serious report to relay.

What should you report? You should report severe weather. This means 1" diameter or larger hail, winds of 50 MPH or more, tornados, waterspouts, funnel clouds, wall clouds,

storm damage to homes/vehicles, large tree limbs down, downed power lines/telephone poles, and flash flooding.

Remember, the ultimate purpose of your report is to inform the NWS of an approaching storm so they can give advance warning to others to take cover.

The DuPage Amateur Radio Club has a wealth of information on its site: skywarn.w9dup.org

2009 Atlantic Hurricane Season Begins June 1

From NOAA News

NOAA forecasters say a near-normal Atlantic hurricane season is most likely this year. However, as with any season, the need to prepare for the possibility of a storm striking near you is essential.

In its initial outlook for the 2009 Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June through November, [NOAA's National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center](#) calls for a 50 percent probability of a near-normal season, a 25 percent probability of an above-normal season and a 25 percent probability of a below-normal season. Global weather patterns are imposing a greater

uncertainty in the 2009 hurricane season outlook than in recent years. Forecasters say there is a 70 percent chance of having nine to 14 named storms, of which four to seven could become hurricanes, including one to three major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5).

Shaping this seasonal outlook is the possibility of competing climate factors. Supporting more activity this season are conditions associated with the ongoing high-activity era that began in 1995, which include enhanced rainfall over West Africa, warmer Atlantic waters and reduced wind shear. But activity could be reduced if El Nino develops in the

equatorial Eastern Pacific this summer or if ocean temperatures in the eastern tropical Atlantic remain cooler than normal.

Tropical systems acquire a name – the first for 2009 will be Ana – upon reaching tropical storm strength with sustained winds of at least 39 mph. Tropical storms become hurricanes when winds reach 74 mph, and become major hurricanes when winds increase to 111 mph. An average season has 11 named storms, including six hurricanes with two becoming major hurricanes.



PHOTO CREDIT: NOAA

Hurricane Radio Information

From voipwx.net

IRLP: Reflector 9219

Echolink: WX-TALK conference

HF: 14.325 MHz USB (WX4NHC among other active stations)

Our Weekly VoIP Skywarn/Hurricane Prep Net is held each on Sunday 0000 UTC, which is Saturday Evening for most of North America. You may join us by connecting to the EchoLink WX-TALK conference server, IRLP Reflector 9219 or to one of the backup systems if the main one goes down. Please check in with us or at least monitor if you are able. To stay abreast of any new wx developments you may want to monitor this NET during hurricanes and possibly any other major severe weather events.



Chicagoland Skywarn

INQUIRIES?
aa9vi@arrl.net
<http://aa9vi.com/wx>

Join our Private Yahoo list
(requires free membership)
[chicagolandskywarn@
yahoogroups.com](mailto:chicagolandskywarn@yahoogroups.com)

Skywarn Liaison Frequencies
(from FISHFAR):

Chicago: 442.975+ MHz
PL114.8 Hz
Schaumburg: 442.9+ MHz
PL 114.8 Hz
Gilberts: 146.925- MHz
PL 100.0 Hz
Gilberts: 442.925+ MHz
PL 114.8 Hz
Joliet: 442.925+ MHz
PL 114.8 Hz

APRS Packet WX: 144.39 MHz

NWS Chicago Website:
weather.gov/chicago

NWS Chicago News

From NWS Chicago
Website

Starting in 2010, the entire fleet of WSR-88Ds (Weather Surveillance Radar – 1988 Doppler) is scheduled to undergo a major software and hardware upgrade that will greatly expand the collection of data types and radar products. This

upgrade, known as dual-polarization, will allow each radar to collect data with information about the horizontal and vertical properties of weather (e.g., rain, hail) and non-weather (e.g., insect, ground clutter) targets. As part of this system upgrade, the National Weather Service's

Warning Decision Training Branch (WDTB) is developing outreach and on-line training for emergency managers, media weather broadcasters, and forecasters in America's Weather Enterprise to help NWS partners to effectively incorporate these new data into their decision making.

Upcoming Ham Exams

June 2 6pm Lincolnwood Comm. Ctr., Lincolnwood, takenchan@aol.com

June 5 7:30pm Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Downers Grove, n9izu@arrl.net

June 6 9am Community Rec. Ctr, Schaumburg, no9a@arrl.net

June 8 7pm, Lake Co. EMA, Libertyville, w9ql@arrl.net

June 12 7pm, Fox Lake Comm. Ctr., Fox Lake, 847-707-6574

June 13 9am, Oak Forest HS, Oak Forest, aa9bv@amsat.org

June 13 9am, Valpo Public Library, Valparaiso IN, w4sv@arrl.net

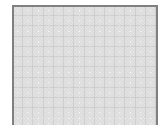
June 20 10am, Fire Station #5, Bolingbrook, call Dale ahead at 815-723-3332

June 25 7:30pm, Northbrook FD Dundee Rd, Northbrook, rich@davidsondata.com

And Finally...

What's new in your club? Do you have any announcements related to Skywarn, or weather related activities? Please let us know. We'd be happy to publicize it!

CHICAGOLAND SKYWARN



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STREET ADDRESS
CITY, ST 60600