

August 19, 2008

Join Clackamas County Radio Amateurs for Emergency Preparedness

Just a few months ago, the winds howled and the waters raged in Northwest Oregon and many of the residents of the area quickly found themselves in the dark, in the cold and without communications. When the local communications infrastructure also failed, it was local volunteer radio amateurs who quickly sprang into action providing vital communications to their community. After a visit to one of the severely affected towns, Governor Kulongoski said, "I'm going to tell you who the heroes were from the very beginning of this...the ham radio operators. These people just came in and actually provided a tremendous communication link to us."

Hams were able to do it not so much because they had special "radio stuff", but mostly because they had knowledge of how that "radio stuff" works. With that knowledge they were able to improvise communications systems in unpredictable situations where the "professionals" sometimes couldn't.

Local hams would like you to join with them to help plan and prepare what they will do when an emergency happens here in southern Clackamas County. A new South County Clackamas division of Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is being formed and will have one of it's first meetings on Thursday, August 28 at the Colton Firehouse at 7PM. ARES has been a vital part of emergency communications in most emergencies around the country, not the least of which was Hurricane Katrina. Be watching for news about how radio amateurs assist disaster victims from hurricanes to earthquakes and beyond whenever disasters happen.

If you are a licensed ham, please come and see if you can find a place of service to your community with ARES. Also, if you are not from the immediate Southern Clackamas area, come anyway. If you are not already a ham, but are just curious about what amateur radio is all about, you are also very welcome.

For more information, check out:

www.socoares.org

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