

Skywarn Net

Training and Tabletop Exercise Presented by Saginaw County ARES



- A Skywarn Net is activated whenever there is Severe Weather observed, or at the request of the White Lake NWS Office. When the Skywarn Net is activated, a Call Up process is initiated to alert all Skywarn Spotters in the area. This may include telephone calls, emails, and/or an announcement over area ham radio repeaters.
- When <u>watches</u> are issued, spotters should monitor local frequencies for further updates and be prepared for activation.

Skywarn Net



- Informal Nets may be called when a Severe Weather Watch is issued by National Weather Service, or when the National Weather Service requests it.
 - An Informal Net alerts Skywarn Spotters to the possibility of a Severe Weather event.
 - This allows all Skywarn stations to get their equipment ready and on the net frequency, and begin sharing informal observation reports on current conditions to track the incoming storm.
 - Check-Ins may be held at this time to get a record of all participating stations.
 - Again, this type of Net is usually informal and may not always precede a Directed Net.
 - This type of Net also allows open use of the repeater by stations not directly
 participating in the Net.
- Informal Nets may be called at anytime, and may end without observing or receiving any reports of severe weather. The important thing is to be ready if hazardous or severe weather occurs.

Informal Nets

- Once a Severe Weather event has been observed, a Weather Warning has been issued, or the NWS has requested Net Activation, a Directed Net will be called opened.
- When a Directed Net is opened, Skywarn traffic becomes priority traffic and the Net Control Station controls all traffic on the frequency.
- All non-participating stations will be asked to move any non-priority traffic to an alternate frequency until the net is closed.
- If the primary net control frequency is either in use by another emergency traffic net or the frequency is otherwise unavailable, the net control traffic will be moved to an alternate frequency.

Directed Nets



- During severe weather or emergency communications, there
 may not always be time to conduct a station check-in. If you
 have something to report, simply follow the reporting criteria
 given in this presentation. If we need information from a
 specific location, we will broadcast this on the air.
- Many times spotters can sit through an entire net lasting hours, and never give a report, and that's perfectly OK.
 Sometimes the best report you can give, is no report at all.
 We know you're out there, and we appreciate your commitment and your eyes!
- Directed Nets may not always be preceded by an Informal Net. They may be called at a moment's notice and without prior warning.

Directed Nets (cont.)

- Safety is a fundamental consideration during Skywarn operations. We take this issue very seriously and you should too!
- For the safety of all and the integrity of SKYWARN, please do not engage in unsafe or unlawful behavior while in the field. The number one rule for participating in SKYWARN is...

Do not place yourself in danger to observe the weather!

- Weather Spotters should not leave the safety of their homes to observe the weather.
- Being a Weather Spotter does not require you to go out and "chase" the storm.
- Your job as a Weather Spotter is to stay indoors and provide reports on your local conditions, at your home.

Skywarn Net Safety & Preparedness



Can you spot what not to do?



More Tornado Videos



EF-3 Tornado crossing the highway in Rago, Kansas

- Under Condition GREEN, spotters may report any storm effects, at the discretion and directions of the net control station, such as:
 - Gust front arrival
 - Approaching thunderstorm
 - Heavy rain, etc.



- Under Condition YELLOW, spotter reports are restricted to RED reports plus other extreme storm effects such as:
 - Intense and frequent lightning
 - Hail (give approximate diameter)
 - Damaging winds (brief reports of damage observed)
 - Torrential rain (with near zero visibility)
 - Flooding over the curbs
- Spotters should otherwise maintain radio silence. Checkins and other less serious reports are not permitted

under Condition Yellow.

Conditions

 Under Condition RED spotters should only report sightings of:

- Tornadoes
- Funnel Clouds
- Wall Clouds
- 1 >diameter or larger hail (quarter size = 1 inch)
- Spotters should otherwise maintain radio silence. Check-ins and other less serious reports are not permitted under Condition RED.

Conditions

• What to Report:

- The date and time of the event
- The location of the event (major cross roads or GPS coordinates)
- Total rainfall of 1 inch or more for an event
- Hail 1 of an inch or greater (Quarter size or greater)
- Wind gusts of 58 mph or greater (please indicate whether winds were measured or estimated)
- Tornado
- Waterspout
- Weather related damage to buildings, trees, or vehicles

Reporting Criteria

 Measured reports are preferred over estimated reports, as they are generally more accurate. However, sometimes it's hard to estimate properly under severe weather conditions. Overestimating is as bad or worse than under-

estimating storm criteria.

Reporting Estimates

Here is a guideline for estimating in your reports.

Hale Size

- Pea Size: 1/4"
- Dime Size: 1/2"
- Penny Size: 3/4"
- Nickel Size: 1"
- Quarter Size: 1"
- Golf Ball Size: 1 3/4"
- Baseball Size: 2 3/4"

Reporting Estimates

• Rainfall Intensity

- Light: Less than 0.2"/Hr.
- Moderate: 0.2" to 1.0"/Hr.
- Heavy: 1.1" to 2.2"/Hr. (Min. reportable)
- Very heavy: 2.3" to 4.5"/Hr.
- **Intense:** 4.6" to 7.1"/Hr.
- **Extreme:** More than 7.1"/Hr.

Reporting Estimates

Quiz time!

Would you report this?

Taken July 20, 2019 in Bay City

What about this?

Or this?

Which would you report?

Remember - Safety is the fundamental consideration during Skywarn operations.

Never place yourself in danger to observe the weather!

- http://ares.saginawradio.com/scares_skywarn.htm
- http://weather.gov/dtx/

The End