

About Ohio ARES

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. Every licensed amateur, regardless of membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization, is eligible for membership in the ARES. The only qualification, other than possession of an Amateur Radio license, is a sincere desire to serve. Because ARES is an amateur service, only amateurs are eligible for membership. The possession of emergency-powered equipment is desirable, but is not a requirement for membership.

There are four levels of ARES organization--national, section, district and local. National emergency coordination at ARRL Headquarters is under the supervision of the ARRL Field and Educational Services Manager, who is responsible for advising all ARES officials regarding their problems, maintaining contact with federal government and other national officials concerned with amateur emergency communications potential, and in general with carrying out the League's policies regarding emergency communications.

At the section level, the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) is appointed by the Section Manager (SM) (who is elected by the ARRL members in his or her section) and works under his/her supervision. In most sections, the SM delegates to the SEC the administration of the section emergency plan and the authority to appoint District Emergency Coordinators (DECs) and local Emergency Coordinators (ECs). Some of the ARRL sections with capable SECs are well-organized. A few have scarcely any organization at all. It depends almost entirely on who the section members have put into office as SM and whom he/she has appointed as SEC.

It is at the local level where most of the real emergency organizing gets accomplished, because this is the level at which most emergencies occur and the level at which ARES leaders make direct contact with the ARES member-volunteers and with officials of the agencies to be served. The local EC is therefore the key contact in the ARES. The EC is appointed by the SEC, usually on the recommendation of the DEC. Depending on how the SEC has set up the section for administrative purposes, the EC may have jurisdiction over a small community or a large city, an entire county or even a group of counties. Whatever jurisdiction is assigned, the EC is in charge of all ARES activities in his area, not just one interest group, one agency, one club or one band.