

EC Comments

January, 2011

By now we all have survived the Christmas Holiday and the New Year's celebrations and we are ready to get settled down with the business of the beginnings of a new year.

December was a slow weather month for us with only a near miss of a major snow event. Looks like our luck was holding, but we know that can end at any time.

We have finally received an initial supply of the new RACES cards and we will begin taking fresh pictures at the January 18th club meeting in preparation for issuing the new cards. Existing RACES members will automatically be issued new cards after having a fresh picture taken. Anyone who has successfully completed their FEMA courses and their background check will be issued new cards. For those of you who would like to join the RACES program, it is not very difficult to qualify.

Current requirements are:

- Attend Skywarn Spotter training as provided by National Weather Service or other approved source a minimum of every two years. Annual participation is recommended.
- Participation in ARES training and activities.
- Successfully complete a felony background check through Emergency Management.
- Successfully complete the following FEMA online courses:
 - IS-22 Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen's Preparedness
 - IS-100b Introduction to Incident Command System
 - IS-700a National Incident Management System (NIMS), an introduction
- RACES leadership has additional requirements including other FEMA courses.

All FEMA online courses can be found at <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>. Upon successful completion of any online FEMA course a copy of your certificate of completion will be emailed to you in convenient PDF format. You can print out a copy for your records and easily email a copy to the county Emergency Coordinator/RACES Officer as certification of course completion. Additional information can be obtained by contacting wb8r@arrl.net.

For long range planning, the 2011 NWS Skywarn spotter training will be held in Coldwater (location TBD) on March 17. This is a Thursday instead of the usual Tuesday and there is no charge for attendance. On March 19 (Saturday) there will be advanced spotter training offered in Elkhart and this session requires payment of an entry fee. I believe that lunch is included in the Elkhart session.

I hope to see everyone at the January Club meeting at the 911 Center on the 18th.

Larry Camp, WB8R

Emergency Coordinator/RACES Officer