



WCF ARES® Communicator

Hurricanes – It Only Takes One

May 2026

Fellow ARES® Members,

[This month our guest editors are Paul, NB9X; Dan Noah, WX4DAN, and Russ, N4RTD from the SKYWARN®/WX Alert Net.]

2026 Hurricane Season

Every year the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) establishes the Atlantic Hurricane Season beginning June 1st and running to November 30th. The National Hurricane Center (NHC – a NOAA unit) provides daily Tropical Weather Outlook identifying potential for hurricanes, tropical storms, and tropical cyclones in the North Atlantic basin. You can access it at [Atlantic 7-Day Graphical Tropical Weather Outlook](#).

This year is no exception. Hurricanes are the most common wide-area disaster event for Wes Central Florida. Our area has some probability of tornados, and damaging straight line winds from severe thunderstorms, but those impacts do not significantly disrupt communications over a large area or displace hundreds of people. Hurricanes pose a much wider area threat, can disrupt communications in multiple counties, and displace hundreds of people to evacuation shelters for many days.

We, as ARES® members, should make sure we are prepared. Consider the following during your preparations:

- Understand the forecasts for the Hurricane Season. Knowing the predictions and the times of peak probability will guide you in your preparation and planning.
- Decide on your evacuation plan. Protection for you and your family takes precedence over any ARES or Auxiliary Communications service. You can find good information at [Plan & Prepare | Florida Disaster](#) from the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM).
- Assemble go-kits and ready bags with food, water, hygiene items, clothing, and pastime items. We'll talk more about this below.
- Prepare your radio gear if you are eligible to be activated or deployed.
- Keep your Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Communications (EMCOMM) training up to date.
- Reach out to hams new to Florida to help them prepare for the season.

- Section Cabinet
- Section Manager
- Darrell Davis, KT4WX
- Assistant Section Manager
- Section Emergency Coordinator
- Section Traffic Manager
- Dave Rockwell W4PXE
- Assistant Section Manager
- Technology
- Technical Coordinator
- Darrell Davis, KT4WX
- Assistant Section Managers
- Jimmy Russ, AB4KA
- Mike Douglas, W4MDD
- Randy Payne K4EZM
- Paul Toth NB9X
- Russ Delaney N4RTD
- Doug Williams N2DW
- Mike Lunsford KB4FHP
- Chuck Johnston W4CWJ
- Dee Turner, N4GD
- Christine Duez K4KJN
- William Miller N1CDO
- Dan Noah WX4DAN
- Chris Bloxsom, AA4CB

Keep in mind that there are numerous opinions on what we need to do to prepare. What we present below are guidelines learned from 10 or more hurricanes over the past 20 years.

NOAA Forecast for 2026

NOAA's forecast for peak hurricane season shows a 50%+ chance of an El Niño developing near the historical peak of the season. Typically, the presence of an El Niño during hurricane season can limit or suppress tropical development. But an El Niño is no guarantee of a quiet season: You can get major hurricane impacts during El Niño seasons. For example, the last three Category 5 hurricanes to hit the U.S. (Camille 1969, Andrew 1992, and Michael 2018) all occurred during hurricane seasons as the ocean was transitioning to weak El Niño conditions.

Key Dates

Official season: June 1 – November 30, 2026

Peak activity: Typically, August through October, with September being the most active month.

Factors Affecting the Season

1. El Niño/La Niña:

- El Niño tends to **suppress Atlantic hurricane activity** because of increased wind shear.
- La Niña tends to **enhance activity** by reducing wind shear. Current forecasts suggest **[insert projected ENSO status closer to season start]**, which will influence storm formation.

2. Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs):

- Warmer-than-average Atlantic waters can fuel stronger and more frequent hurricanes.

3. Atmospheric Conditions:

- Wind shear, Saharan dust, and high-pressure systems can either inhibit or encourage storm development.

Historical Averages (Atlantic Basin)

- **Named storms:** ~ 14
- **Hurricanes:** ~ 7
- **Major hurricanes (Category 3+):** ~ 3

Shelter and Evacuation Planning

We also need to have all ARES members focus their “personal preparations” to include contingencies for Shelter, Food, Medicine and Personal Safety. Fortunately, the last several hurricanes have afforded many ARES members real experience they can draw on. For any NEW Hams moving to Florida and getting ready for their first Hurricane experience, living without electricity and normal communications for weeks, or not having real access to food or fuel will be something new. Here, ARES leadership can provide mentoring and guidance to these new members.

Keep in mind that emergency managers recommend that you evacuate far enough to be out of danger but not a long distance away from your home. The rule of thumb is evacuating tens of miles not hundreds. If possible, evacuate in a direction 90° to the predicted track of the approaching storm. If you are prone to coastal or areal flooding and own an electric vehicle, consider moving the vehicle well outside of the flood zone. During Hurricane Helene in 2024 numerous electric vehicles caught fire and even exploded when they became flooded. Always follow the instructions from your city or county on when you and your family need to evacuate. Don't forget about your pets; take them with you.

Some cities and counties require you to register if you plan to use a public shelter. This is especially true for pet friendly shelters and special needs shelters that accommodate folks with disabilities or medical conditions. Plan and research the requirements for your planned shelter location. You may need to provide your own food, water, bedding, and hygiene items. There may be restrictions on what you can bring to a shelter.

ARES members who plan to use public shelters should consider getting trained and approved to be a shelter operator for your local ARES or ACS group. Most emergency communications teams never seem to have enough shelter operators. Being an active radio operator is better than sitting on your cot reading a book or playing solitaire.

Personal and Family Preparations

Besides evacuation and shelter-in-place planning, you should have some stocks on hand for during the storm and the next couple weeks after. With every hurricane that strikes the West Coast of Florida, our infrastructure service providers (e.g. power, water, sanitation, telephone and internet, etc.) get faster at restoring basic services. These partners have invested in resilient systems and protections to make their services more robust. Still, we can count on at least some disruption.

Every family should be prepared with about 14 days' worth of water, non-perishable food, and hygiene supplies. You should stock about 1 gallon of water per person per day. While many of us stockpile bottled water, saving potable tap water in containers meets the requirement and can be a bit more economical. After most hurricanes, boil water notices will be in effect for tap water until the water system operators can confirm the tap water is safe to drink. Consider having a camp stove that uses propane or butane so you can boil water. Remember, use these camp stoves in an open, well-ventilated area, preferably outside to avoid the risk of carbon monoxide.

Your food stocks should be non-perishable. Unless you have a generator to keep your refrigerator and freezers running, you should consider having canned or dried food available. Decide on how many meals you plan to eat each day and have about one and a half times that amount on hand for 14 days. That's a lot, but you will be prepared if the situation lasts longer than planned. A camp stove used safely is handy in preparing the food. In a Gemini search I learned that food in a closed refrigerator without power will last about 4 hours. If

your freezer is full, food should last about 48 hours.

Many of us have small or whole-house generators. A whole-house generator system, installed by a qualified, licensed contractor, should be safe to operate. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on using it during the storm and keep all windows and doors adjacent to the unit closed to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. For smaller portable generators (like our family uses) locate the generator outside (not in a garage or enclosed patio) and keep all windows adjacent to the generator closed. Make sure you use the proper gauge wiring from the generator to your appliances and don't exceed the average power specification. We strongly recommend that you have a licensed electrician install a cutover switch and an external generator connection box. Consider powering your refrigerator, freezer, microwave, television and internet, and a utility outlet so you can charge phones and tablets.

Assemble Your Personal and Family Hurricane Kit

Whether you are evacuating or sheltering-in-place, organize your hurricane supplies in easy to move containers. If you evacuate and have room in your vehicle, take the supplies with you if you evacuate. If you leave them, make sure they are well above any potential flooding and in a location where wind will not carry them off. We recommend medium size plastic storage boxes with snap on lids. It's still a good idea to tightly tie or strap the lids. We came back from an evacuation to find the garage had flooded, our plastic storage containers had floated, turned over, and spilled most of their contents in the ugly water. Now we strap the lids and store them 3 feet or more off the ground. Probably not best for a Category 5 but much safer for Cat 3 and below.

We like to have 7 to 10 days of clothes ready in suitcases a week before the storm is projected to arrive. That way we can leave in a hurry. For hurricane season, pack lighter clothing, have some long sleeve shirts and light weight long slacks in case you must spend some time in the hot sun. It always seems that right after the hurricane or tropical storm passes, it's hot and humid with a high UV index. It's not a bad idea to throw in a waterproof windbreaker and a sweatshirt or two. It can get cool in the evening, especially in the fall, which is our peak season. Make sure you have a good sun hat with a chin strap. Baseball caps are OK, but they don't provide good protection for ears and the back of the neck.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) provides a checklist (<http://floridadisaster.org/Kit>) to help identify and arrange supplies in your Disaster Supply Kit. We've included the checklist as an attachment.

Emergency Communications and Incident Training

For your radio go-kit, bring the radios you are most likely to use. The big HF sideband rig and linear amplifier may be impressive, but it will be heavy, take considerable power, and probably not get used. Of course, your kit should be tailored to the service you will perform for your support agency.

You may only need an HT programmed with your local contingency channels. Don't forget to bring a charger. If you HT has an alkaline battery option (sometimes called a clamshell) bring it and 24 batteries or more. If you are at a shelter and have AA batteries you can spare, you will quickly become very popular.

For larger go-kits, consider a deep-cycle battery (sealed lead acid or LiPo) and a solar charger with enough power to charge your battery in about 4 hours. Personally, I like to store and carry my go-kit in a watertight carry case (e.g. Pelican) rather than in a 4U or 6U rack. I find the cases easier for one person to handle and there is usually a table at the location I can set the board with the radios on. Consider carrying a folding table

and a couple folding chairs.

We can't stress training enough. All ARES members should complete the ARRL EMCOMM training courses. We recommend—and your sponsoring agency may require—you to complete and keep current on the Emergency Management Institute's IS-100 and IS-700 courses, which are updated approximately every three years. Other National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) courses will better prepare you to respond during a disaster. Many of the courses are available for independent study online and more advanced courses may be available through your local emergency management organizations.

As part of your go-kit, have 20 or so copies of the ICS forms and other documents that you may need to fill out during disaster operations. Remember to keep a log of all your activities (the ICS-214, Activity Log is a good format). Keep a detailed timeline of your actions, agreements, accidents, and assignments. You will need this information if you are asked to participate in a hot wash or after-action review.

Continue to expand and practice your skills as a communicator. Become comfortable with being a net control station, message handler, and field observer. If your agency uses Task Books, open and complete the task book for your operating positions. Learn how to use things like the public service radio system, the remote mail services, and alternative communications systems of your agency. The more skills you have, the more valuable you become.

Practice using your radio equipment. Look for events in your local area where you can operate your equipment and get the rust off your operating skills. Make sure you know how to program additional frequencies on your radio. If you are deployed, you may need to add channels to your radios to participate in operations. Have the computer programming software (CPS) on a disk or thumb drive so you can activate it if needed to make several changes to your code plug (i.e., the channels programmed on your radio). Some of the newer HTs have cellphone apps that let you program the radio using Bluetooth.

Snowbirds and Vacationers

Many ARES members spend half the year in cooler climates (our so-called snowbirds). Also, the summer months (during Hurricane Season) are prime time for vacations, RV excursions, and sea cruises. Before departing the area consider securing your radio equipment so it will be safe and secure while you are out of town. If you are travelling by car, RV, or truck, you might want to take your Hurricane Kit and your radio go-kit with you. If you don't take the items with you, ensure they are stored in a secure area in the center of the house or garage. If your home is prone to flooding (even if it's once every hundred years), store your supplies and gear above possible high-water level. You may want to tie the handles of go-kits to something solid in case your home is compromised by wind. Large garbage bags closed with zip ties can add additional protection during flooding and potential rain intrusion. The key is to plan for a disaster to hit while you are away and take appropriate actions.

Help Your Fellow Hams

As an ARES member, you should be ready to help fellow amateur operators to prepare for Hurricane Season. Also, we encourage you to actively recruit new members to ARES. When disasters like hurricanes strike, we never have enough radio operators to cover all the evacuation shelters and emergency operations centers. The best way to fill our ranks is word-of-mouth, one ham telling another how rewarding public service can be.

Years ago, in a company far away (where I was a Chief Scientist) all of us in the upper echelon were expected to have what we called an Elevator Speech. Basically, it was a one-to-two-minute spiel about our company and what we can do for customers. The most important thing to realize is that the person you are talking to is tuned into radio station WIFM (What's in it for me). Your elevator speech needs to catch their attention, pique their interest, and leave them wanting more.

Here's my ARES elevator speech, "Are you a member of an ARES group? <If yes, ask them about their recent activities> <if no> "You know we are always looking for hams to join us in to provide emergency services. Many of us staff the radio rooms at county EOCs and serve as radio operators/communicators at evacuation shelters, the Red Cross, and other responder agencies. I find it to be tremendously rewarding. I serve in the Pinellas County EOC as night lead radio officer. Please think about joining ARES. If you are interested give me a call and I'll hook you up with the ARES group in your area. Here's my card." OK, yes, I spent the money on some business cards (printed on my inkjet) and I carry them anytime I'm wearing my ARES or ACS shirt.

Don't be discouraged, only about one in ten people will call you back, but that's what we need. Also be careful about what I call "eating the young". That's when you start talking about the negative side of our hobby like, "You will see a lot of guys who are older than dirt." or "You won't like so-and-so. Just stay away from her." You can probably think of 5 or 10 more statements. The point is to let the new ARES members discover the less savory facts for themselves.

If you're talking to old-hand ARES members, offer to help with projects. It's always fun to visit someone else's shack and help install new radios, transmission lines, and antennas. You might learn some new skills, and you might have the perfect solution for other hams' problems. Besides spending time with other amateur operators, in-person and in informal settings, builds our hobby community.

Become an ambassador for public service and ARES.

WCF ARES In Action:



Your local community Hurricane Expo is an excellent opportunity to showcase your ARES groups capabilities and potentially recruit new operators and members. Consider teaming up with any Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to present a unified picture of disaster communications and support. Joining other support groups like SARG or Red Cross can be both rewarding and beneficial to your community.

Remember, in ARES service is our watchword. Be ready to help your agencies however they need your assistance. Remember Emergency Services are what we do.

Upcoming ARES Events:

Dates	Event
May 16, 2026, 1300 Eastern	WCF Section ARES Annual Conference, in-person, Hillsborough Public Service Operations Center (PSOC), 9450 E Columbus Dr, Tampa, FL 33619

Call to Action:

As noted above, we will be hosting our first (and hopefully) annual West Central Florida Section ARES Conference, on 16 May at the Hillsborough PSOC. We are looking for topics and presentations. Our theme this year is “Be Ready When Called”. Let W4PXE know if you have a topic you would like to give a 20-minute talk on. Also, we welcome suggested topics for the leadership to discuss.

We need pictures and descriptions of ARES events to include in our ARES In Action segment. Show off your ARES team. These can be exercises, drills, or just weekly/monthly meetings. We would really like to see ARES members in action providing COMMs at an event, maintaining equipment, or participating in training. Include member names and call signs, so we can caption the photos correctly and give our members the credit they deserve. Remember to ask their permission to use the photo. We especially like to see members wearing their logo shirts and/or reflective vests. Try not to look like an antenna farm. Also, give us a short description of the event.

Sincerely,
Dave Rockwell, W4PXE
Section Emergency Coordinator
ARRL® West Central Florida Section
Email: w4pxe@arrl.net





DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST



General

- Two week minimum supply of medication, regularly used medical supplies, and a list of allergies
- A list of the style, serial number, and manufacturer information of required medical devices
- Batteries
- Flashlights
Do not use candles
- NOAA Weather Radio
Battery operated or hand cranked
- Cash
Banks and ATMs may not be available after a storm
- Cell phone chargers
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Phone Numbers

- Maintain a list of important phone numbers including:
County emergency management office, evacuation sites, doctors, banks, schools, veterinarian, a number for out of town contacts, friends and family

Clothing

- Rain gear such as jackets, hats, umbrellas and rain boots
- Sturdy shoes or boots and work gloves

Special Needs Items

- Specialty items for infants, small children, the elderly, and family members with disabilities

First Aid

- First Aid Manual
- Sterile adhesive bandages of different sizes
- Sterile gauze pads
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Sewing needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Thermometer
- Tube of petroleum jelly
- Safety pins
- Soap
- Latex gloves
- Sunscreen
- Aspirin or other pain reliever
- Anti-diarrheal medicine
- Antacid
- Laxative
- Cotton balls
- Q-tips

Food and Water

- Food
Nonperishable packaged or canned food and beverages, snack foods, juices, baby food, and any special dietary items to last at least 7 days
- Water
1 gallon per person per day
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Plastic cups
- Utensils

Important Documents

- Insurance cards
 - Medical records
 - Banking information
 - Credit card numbers
 - Copies of social security cards
 - Copies of birth and/or marriage certificates
 - Other personal documents
 - Set of car, house, and office keys
 - Service animal I.D., veterinary records, and proof of ownership
 - Information about where you receive medication, the name of the drug, and dosage
 - Copy of Will
- *Items should be kept in a water proof container*

Vehicle

- Keep your motor vehicle tanks filled with gasoline

Pet Care Items

- Pet food and water to last at least 7 days
- Proper identification
- Medical records/microchip information
- A carrier or cage
- Muzzle and leash
- Water and food bowls
- Medications
- Supplies for your service animal

Find more disaster preparedness tips at FloridaDisaster.org



ARES Field Reports

[Logout](#) David Rockwell, W4PXE, WCF SEC

[ARES Home](#) [Submit Form 2](#) [Submit Form 4](#) [List Reports](#) [Summary Reports](#)

Form 4 - ARES Monthly SEC Report

[Print this page](#)

Success! The following information was submitted by David Rockwell, W4PXE, WCF SEC for **West Central Florida, March, 2026.**

Total number of ARES members:	497
Difference in ARES members from previous month:	N/D
Number of DECs/ECs reporting this month:	10
Total number of DECs/ECs in section:	9
Number of ARES net sessions held:	49
Number of ARES net sessions held with NTS liaison:	18
Number of participants in nets:	955

	Number	Person-Hrs
Exercises this month:	2	79.00
Training events this month:	11	337.00
Public service events this month:	0	0.00
Community service events this month:	1	4.00
Emergency events this month:	0	0.00
SKYWARN events this month:	15	193.00
Meetings this month:	18	303.00
Unclassified events this month:	4	29.00

Call signs of DECs reporting:

W4PXE, W4PXE

Activity Details:

CHARLOTTE COUNTY-----

3-16-26 in-person meeting, 25 attended, 2,5 hours.

3-26-26 hurricane drill with all county shelters and 5 hospitals. Utilized winlink, NXDN, FM simplex and repeaters. Difficulty with simplex.

DESOTO COUNTY-----

Nothing significant to report.

HARDEE COUNTY-----

Conducted five sessions of the Hardee County ARES Net on Monday March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. Had a total of 30 check-ins, for a total net time of 78 minutes. Total volunteer time for nets was 1.3 hours. On Saturday March 28, Darrell Davis KT4WX, participated in the MS Suncoast Challenge,

helping to provide communications for a test stop. Also facilitated rest stop operator assignment. Total volunteer time at the rest stop: 4 hours. Total volunteer time facilitating rest stop operator assignments: 4 hours.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY-----

Nothing significant to report.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY-----

The ARES/RACES team transitioned to the new circuits the county is providing. The radio rooms were on a shared 10 meg guest network, which became very slow during activations. ARES/RACES now has redundant circuits, 1 at the Primary EOC location and the second one at the Alternate EOC location, with a County VPN connection between them.

MANATEE COUNTY-----

The monthly Membership Meeting of the Manatee County Emergency Support Group, Inc. (ARES/RACES) was held at the Bible Baptist Church of Bradenton on 3/24/2026. Following introduction of new members and visitors, we heard announcements from the EC and all the AECs. The Feature of the Month was titled, "Family Emergency Planning; A Refresher ". The Question of the Month was, "Why does 3dB make such a difference in FM Quieting? "The Threshold Effect on FM Reception""

A monthly EmComm Staff (AEC's, Deputies, and Liaisons) Meeting was held via Zoom on 3/4/2026.

The monthly MCESG, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting was held via Zoom on 3/17/2026.

We held "HF Day" on the MAN-10 Repeater on 3/11/2026.

Our annual financial audit was completed on Thursday, March 19th. No issues were found.

MCESG Elections are coming in May with the VP, Secretary, and Member@Large terms open for self-nominations.

The Giving Challenge, a bi-annual fund raising event is scheduled for the 24 hour period from Noon-to-noon, April 14-15 with matching funds from the Patterson Foundation. You can access the secure link to our Giving Challenge homepage below:

<https://www.givingchallenge.org/organizations/manatee-county-emergency-support-group-inc>

PINELLAS COUNTY-----

Normal activities including weekly maintenance of Command Runners and Satellite Runners.

POLK COUNTY-----

Our 4th week will be focused on simplex communications.

SARASOTA COUNTY-----

SRQARES Hospital Simulation Emergency Test / DRILL

PASCO COUNTY-----

Nothing significant to report.

WCF 80 Meter ARES Net-----

Net Manager: Bill Johnson, N4NOA
Sessions=4, QNI=106, QND=41 minutes.

Official Emergency Stations-----

W3ATR, John Snow, Manatee County
Connected VARA HF P2P to GAARES weekly ck in
participated in weekly ETO exercises

participate in weekly MCESG net
participated in SRQ ARES net
participated in SERC net
participated in WCF Monday & Saturday Nets
Sent Winlink traffic via packet & VERA FM

AD4ZH, John Hubbard, Manatee County
Worked the 3940 net @ 7:45 AM daily
Worked the MCESG ARES Monday each week
Attended MCESG monthly meeting.
checked in the west coast ARES net on Monday nights
I was active in the EmComm meeting and worked with two on winlink
Check in 3940 SFAR net daily @ 7:45AM
Worked the MCESG A

KO4IHP, Tim Gardner, Sarasota County
3/2 Rec'd traffic on WCF ARES Net - 27 Checkins, 1 Traffic, 30 Mins.
3/9 Rec'd traffic on WCF ARES Net - 30 Checkins, 1 Traffic, 31 Mins.
3/16 Rec'd traffic on WCF ARES Net - 33 Checkins, 1 Traffic, 35 Mins
3/23 Net Control for WCF ARES Net - Fill in for KM4WXX
3/19, 3/26 Winlink Checkin on SRQ ARES Net

KM4WXX, Sanford Wyatt, Sarasota County
WCF UHF/VHF ARES/ INFORMATION NET WCF NTS EAGLE NET MANAGER 19 HOURS.

KR4X, Larry Gispert, Hillsborough County
O.E.S. Report from KR4X for March 2026
checked in 4 times to the WCF ARES EC/OES Net on 3.940 mhz
checked in 3 times to the CGCWOA CW Net on 14.052 mhz
checked in 4 times to the SFL ARES Net on 3.940 mhz
total activity 11 hours 0 miles driven

N4NOA, Bill Johnson, Hillsborough County
QNI
South FL Net- 15
WCF ARES Net- 5
WCF 80 Meter Net- 4 Both NCS and Net Manager

Section Emergency Coordinator-----
Set date and coordinated with Section Manager for our first Section-wide ARES
Conference (ARESCON) to be held on 16 May 2026 at the Hillsborough Public Service
Operations Complex (PSOC) hosted by Bill Miller, Hillsborough ARES/RACES Coordinator.

Administrative and Other Comments:

CHARLOTTE COUNTY-----

n-person meeting, 25 attended, 2,5 hours.
hurricane drill with all county shelters and 5 hospitals. Utilized winlink, NXDN, FM simplex and
repeaters. Difficulty with simplex. Submitted by Jim Nelson, W4AII, Designee,
jim3nelson@yahoo.com

DESOTO COUNTY-----

Submitted by Douglas Christ, KN4YT, EC, kn4yt@yahoo.com.

HARDEE COUNTY-----

Submitted by Darrell Davis, KT4WX, EC.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY-----

The new addition to the Emergency Operations Center was completed. We are now working emergency management on a 5 year plan to be included in the County's plan to upgrade county and ARES equipment located at our tower sites, to include the possible addition of two additional tower sites for ARES repeaters. It includes other items as well, such as planning back up systems for the county in the event they loose their ability to communicate, and training, including ham license classes for any county personnel. Submitted by Jeff Bronsing, KJ4NEO, EC, kj4neo@gmail.com

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY-----

Working on the development team for the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) exercise to be conducted May 12-13. SKYwarn training class at 1000 May 16th at Hillsborough County PSOC. Starts right after Hillsborough Bi-Monthly meeting. Submitted by Bill Miller, N1CDO, EC/RO, millerbj@hcfl.gov.

MANATEE COUNTY-----

attended the SHARES Working Group Meeting on 3/27/2026.
Our current Membership Metrics are;
52 Active Members
41 Qualified (73%) - 16 at Level 1, 17 at Level 2, 5 at Level 3
Amateur Licensees: 25 Extra, 3 Adv, 12 Gen, 12 Tech

If you are on Facebook, please like and share our page: <https://www.facebook.com/manateeares>

A host of reference documents, training materials and Monthly Membership Proceedings can be found on our website; WWW.MCESG.ORG

For more details, please feel free to contact me anytime by phone or text at (727) 542-4729 or by email at spark003@live.com

73,
Steve Park, W4OEP Submitted by Stephen Park, W4OEP, EC, spark003@live.com.

PINELLAS COUNTY-----

Nothing noteworthy to report. Submitted by Will Scott, W7WMS, Designated Rep, will.w7wms@gmail.com.

POLK COUNTY-----

Continued analysis of Dark Start. Developed forms and procedures for contacting members and developed an information list that an NCO would need when working in a disaster scenario. Submitted by Christine Duez, K4KJN, EC, cduetz10@yahoo.com.

SARASOTA COUNTY-----

DMR Repeater up and running. Submitted by Mike Kearney, KG7KIQ, EC, mbk7@comcast.net.

PASCO COUNTY-----

Submitted by Tim Cunningham, KM4YGV, EC, tdc@earthling.net.

Section Emergency Coordinator-----

20 admin hours compiling ARES Communicator, collecting county statistic, and copiling this report.