
KDØCI's Radio Newsletter

Volume 2 Number 14 - Supporting Amateur Radio in East Central Minnesota - December 25, 2007

WINTER STORMS ACTIVATE RADIO AMATEURS

Winter storms in Minnesota during early December presented an opportunity for local Ham radio operators to report on conditions in their area by participating in a local Two Meter Weather Net. Meanwhile storms elsewhere in the country put Ham Radio operators into the position of once again providing emergency communications when other means of communications either became overloaded or failed.

On the afternoon of November 30th when it appeared certain that East Central Minnesota was going to get hit with a major winter storm, KDØCI sent out an email message to all area amateurs alerting them that a local weather net would be activated on 146.565 MHz when the storm entered the area.

Earlier that same day, a conference call was held by the Duluth National Weather Service Office with Public Service officials, local news media, and Ham Radio operators to discuss the coming winter storm.

By mid-morning on December 1st, the snow began to fall and the net was activated. Several area stations checked in periodically throughout the remainder of the day and early evening with KDØCI, reporting on snowfall and visibility conditions. One other station checked in reporting on road conditions. The reports were then periodically relayed by KDØCI to the National Weather Service in Duluth via [eSpotter](#), a direct reporting tool available to registered spotters on the Duluth NWS website. This service is also available on the Minneapolis [Chanhassen] NWS website.

The net served as a valuable training tool for, among other reasons, becoming familiar with [eSpotter](#), and the need to establish firm reporting times on the net. There is also the issue of where best to submit [eSpotter](#) reports. The only problem with the use of [eSpotter](#) through Duluth was that since Kanabec County is not officially a part of the Duluth coverage area, there were no provisions for logging observations from Kanabec County with them. So, KDØCI had to file reports with them by selecting Pine County, and then adding supplemental Kanabec County location information to the report. This problem is being addressed and should be solved by the time the next major storm event takes place.

While this particular weather net operated on 146.565 MHz, future plans are for weather net activity to take place on the Ogilvie repeater at 147.240 MHz, with 146.565 MHz serving as the backup in the event the repeater goes down. The plan also includes the Ogilvie repeater eventually being linked to Duluth for Skywarn.

Meanwhile, the Associated Press reported that parts of Oregon were overwhelmed by rain and wind during an early December storm. Many means of communication were ineffective because of down trees and power lines in the area affected by the storm. Cell phone coverage was also limited.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski declared in the aftermath of the storm that Ham Radio operators were the heroes from the very beginning. "They just came in and actually provided a tremendous communication link to us," he said following a flyover of the devastated area. Over 60 volunteer operators provided emergency communications for State Police, the Red Cross, and hospitals, and helped relay information on needed supplies.

Finally, according to a report posted on ARRL's website, ARES was activated to provide emergency communications in Oklahoma during a severe ice storm that all but shut down the Central Plains states. The storm also affected a wide area from Texas to New England. The Tulsa area appeared to be the hardest hit, where only five hospitals had available power. Statewide, over 600,000 people including over 250,000 households and businesses were without power at one point. An additional 350,000 people were without power in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and Illinois.

Tim Hoss, Safety Officer for the Oklahoma State University Medical Center thanked all the volunteers who helped maintain communications between them and the Medical Emergency Response Center. "I hope you and all your fellow hams know how greatly respected you are in the eyes of emergency planners for Tulsa," he said. "Your organization is the one that will get through when no one else can."

NOVEMBER DRILL HELD AT ST PAUL UNITED HOSPITAL

Contributed by Paul Oby - KCØESE

Earlier in November three members of Ramsey County REACT tested a newly installed Kenwood dual band mobile in St Paul's United Hospital. The test was done with four other Alina hospitals and things went very well.

Several hospital staff members including the Chief of Security were on hand, and were very impressed.

The radio has to be programmed yet and I hope to have that done soon. Everything was done in VFO mode since I didn't have an instruction manual.

United is cooperating fully and it appears that Ramsey County REACT will be in charge. It must be noted that we didn't ask for or expect any of this. One of our members is an employee there and he just kept pushing until it was in. (That may be something your newsletter could start talking about. I understand that the Fairview hospitals may be lagging behind.)

A radio room should be ready early next year.

This project is being done with the consent of the Minnesota Health Department. Anyone interested (and I hope there are many) should contact Section Manager Skip Jackson ks0j@arrl.net to get things rolling. I think there is grant money available for this.

The VA Hospital conducted a Ham class in December for those interested in their Technician license and word has it that 75 people signed up. The class was announced to all metro hospitals in hopes of having licensed operators available when necessary.

HAMMING 101 – What About Simple Homebrew Antennas?

One thing about being into ham radio, you often learn as you go about operating practices and procedures. Some Hams offer free “on the air” advice for newcomers. Most of the time they are polite about it, and gratitude should be expressed to those “on the air Elmers”. Once in awhile though, you might run into a rude someone with a chip on their shoulder, [in other words, a lid] so in order to spare you any “on air embarrassment”, I'll attempt to do the polite thing by passing along some free “off the air” advice in this series called “Hamming 101”.

In this issue, let's talk briefly about simple homebrew antennas.

There are lots of plans available for manufacturing your very own antennas, known as “Homebrews”. The nice thing about “Homebrew” antennas is that the cost is about as minimal as antennas can get. The other thing is, building your own antennas is not only personally rewarding, it is one of the remaining areas in this hobby where you can apply your expertise as you learn to experiment to your hearts content.

Ever since I became licensed, I've been building my own HF antennas, mainly for 160, 75, and 40 meters. Of course you need quite a bit of space to put up a dipole antenna for these lower bands. If you have the space, all you need is strong quality wire, end and center insulators, and some nylon rope. Just remember the formula for determining the radiating length of a half wave dipole antenna [468 divided by the frequency in MHz], then you're in business.

While building HF antennas has been my personal specialty, building J-Pole Antennas for two meters seems to be a favorite pastime for at least three local experimenters, KBØHDA, KCØYBX, and KCØYUE. You newer Hams might want to consider contacting these guys if you are looking to just get on the air on two meters. Not only are they easy to build, they appear to be VERY effective. I recently received J-Pole and Ground Plane antenna plans that were drawn up by KBØHDA, which I can make available to anyone who might be interested.

In a related note, I have a copy of the Amateur Radio Handbook CD from KBØHDA that can be borrowed by anyone that may be interested. The Amateur Radio Handbook, published by the ARRL, is generally recognized as the Ham Radio operators “bible”, as it is jam packed with information on every aspect of this hobby, including the building of antennas.

NOAA WEATHER RADIO

This is the first of a two part series on National Weather Service NOAA Weather Radio.

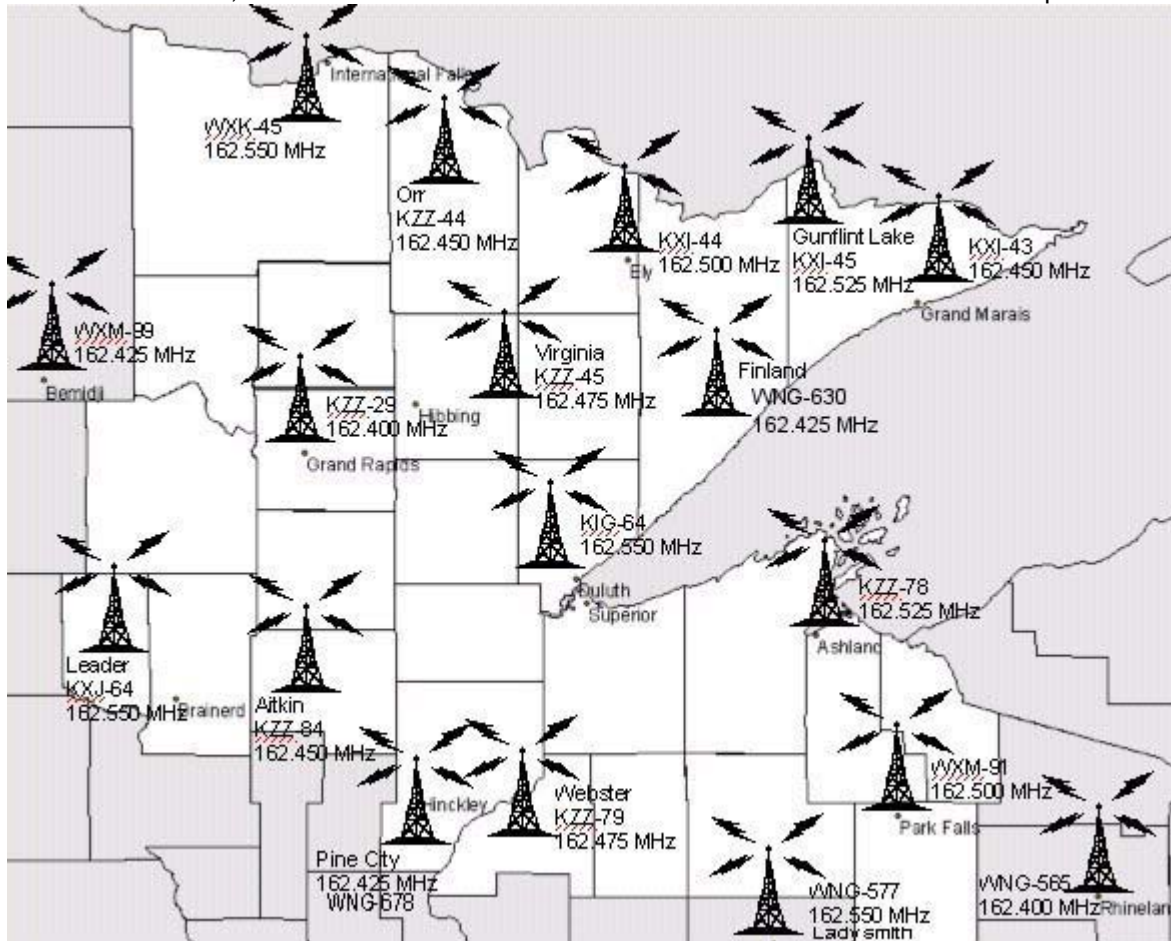
National Weather Service NOAA Weather Radio serves the nation broadcasting weather information to the public 24 hours a day from strategically located stations over 7 designated frequencies.

Besides being available on General Coverage Scanners, most Amateur VHF equipment being sold these days include these WX frequencies either as part of their extended receive capabilities, or in a stand alone bank of WX frequencies. There is even 11 meter CB gear being sold with weather radio frequencies included.

Otherwise, Weather Radios may be purchased just about anywhere radios are sold. Prices range from \$20 to \$200 depending on the model and features. Weather radios with built in alert capability is a highly recommended household item. These radios are programmed to send out an alert tone activated by an encoded 1050 Hz signal received from the National Weather Service Forecast Office in the event of severe weather, and can potentially be a life saver.

Besides weather information, NOAA Weather Radio is also commissioned to disseminate critical information in the event of a national emergency. More consumer information about Weather Radios can be found on the Internet at <http://www.weather.gov/nwr/nwrrcvr.htm>

Below is a map showing locations and frequencies of stations in the Duluth NWS Coverage area. Those of us living in East Central Minnesota and extreme Northwestern Wisconsin are best served by the Pine City, Aitkin, and Duluth stations in Minnesota, and the Webster station in Wisconsin. The Pine City station in particular provides timely severe weather information to adjacent counties not directly in the Duluth coverage area. This is of particular benefit to those of us in Kanabec County where reception of Minneapolis coverage area stations such as those in Clearwater and St Cloud are not as good because of distance and terrain obstacles, and are also vulnerable to atmospherics during the summer. Next time, we will include information on Weather Radio stations in the Minneapolis NWS Coverage Area.



Map courtesy of the National Weather Service - Duluth

INFORMATION PAGE – Print and post in your shack

Two Meter Repeaters – Updated November 26th 2007

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>OFFSET</u>	<u>PL TONE</u>	<u>CALL SIGN</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Aitkin	146.805	Minus	156.7	KCØQXC	
Becker	147.345	Plus	85.4	KØOS	Skywarn
Big Lake	146.775	Minus	None	NØRPP	
Brainerd	145.130	Minus	110.9*	WØUJ	*PL Tone Implementation Pending
Brainerd	147.225	Plus	None	WØUJ	
Cambridge	146.640	Minus	146.2	WRØP	Skywarn
Crown	145.230	Minus	127.3	NØGEF	Skywarn
Elk River	146.970	Minus	None	KØCJD	
Foreston	146.745	Minus	107.2	NØGOI	
Giese	146.865	Minus	151.4	KBØQYC	
Isle	146.610	Minus	None	WBØSYO	Linked to KØHPY/R, Forest Lake
Little Falls	147.135	Plus	123.0	WØREA	
Mahtowa	147.000	Minus	103.5	NØBNG	Skywarn
Milaca	145.350	Minus	141.3*	WBØMPE	*PL Tone Is Currently Off
Ogilvie	147.240	Plus	146.2	KDØCI	Under Construction
North Branch	145.230	Minus	100.0	NØKVL	
North Branch	147.315	Plus	91.5	KCØASX	
Princeton	145.470	Minus	114.8	KGØUY	
Princeton	146.895	Minus	203.5	NØRPP*	*Custodial Change Pending
Rush City	145.330	Minus	None	NØABR	
St Cloud	146.835	Minus	85.4	NØOYQ	Skywarn
St Cloud	146.940	Minus	None	WØSV	
St Cloud	147.015	Plus	100.0	WØSV	Central Region Emergency Net

REGIONAL EMERGENCY & SKYWARN FREQUENCIES

Mille Lacs & Kanabec Counties: [Simplex] 146.565 MHz, [Repeaters] Ogilvie 147.240 MHz, Milaca 145.350 MHz

National Weather Service [Duluth KØNWS]:

Northland Skywarn: Mahtowa - 147.00 MHz

Northland Skywarn: Ogilvie - 147.240 MHz [PLANNED]

75 Meter Skywarn Net: 3810 KHz LSB, Alternate: 3820 KHz LSB.

National Weather Service [Minneapolis/Chanhassen KØMPX]:

Isanti County Skywarn: Cambridge - 146.640 MHz

Benton County Skywarn: Sauk Rapids - 146.835 MHz

Sherburne County Skywarn: Becker – 147.345 MHz

Regional Packet: 145.670 MHz

REGIONAL NET INFORMATION -

EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NET

Every Tuesday @ 7 PM – 146.565 Simplex [& soon, 147.240 - KDØCI Repeater, Ogilvie]

CENTRAL REGION EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NET

First Wednesday of every month @ 1 PM – 147.015 [WØSV Repeater, St Cloud]

UPPER MIDWEST TEN METER NET

Every Thursday Evening @ 8 PM – 28.475 MHz USB [Net Control KBØHDA]

NEWCOMERS NET

Every Monday Evening @ 8 PM – 147.015 MHz [WØSV Repeater, St Cloud]

MINNESOTA SECTION PHONE NET

Twice Daily: @ 12 Noon [Net Manager: KØBLR] and @ 5:30 PM [Net Manager: WOØA] - 3860 KHz LSB.

“CABIN FEVER RELIEVER” AND “MIDWINTER MADNESS” HAMFESTS

Reprint from November Newsletter

With the onset of winter, ones thoughts eventually turn towards looking for a way to break the after Christmas winter doldrums. Well, here are a couple of events to help you out, especially if Christmas came and went without any radio equipment purchases. Make your plans now to attend one or both of these upcoming winter hamfests.

The St Cloud Radio Club announced that it's annual “Cabin Fever Reliever” Hamfest will be Saturday February 16th at the National Guard Armory, located at 1710 8th Street North in St Cloud. Talk-in on the 147.015 [PL 100.0], or 146.940 repeaters. More info available at the St Cloud Radio Club website: <http://www.w0sv.org> or email wa0njr@hotmail.com.

Then, on Saturday March 29th, the annual Midwinter Madness, sponsored by the Robbinsdale Amateur Radio Club, will take place at the Civic Center, 1306 Calder Drive, in Buffalo. Talk-in on the 147.00 repeater. More info is available at <http://www.k0lfc.org>, or email k0lfc@k0lfc.org.

REGIONAL INFORMATION – Courtesy of ARRL & Other Sources

UPCOMING VE TESTING IN EASTERN MINNESOTA AND NORTHWESTERN WISCONSIN

Saturday January 5th 2008

Sponsor: ST PAUL RADIO CLUB

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DAVID M BUENDING

(952)486-0836

Email: AD2B@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: ROSEVILLE CITY HALL

2660 COUNTY ROAD C

NW COR CTY RD C & LEXINGTON AVE,

ROSEVILLE, MINNESOTA 55101

Saturday January 26th 2008

Sponsor: Sherburne County ARES

Time: 8:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Time: 8:30 AM

Location: Elk River American Legion

525 Railroad Dr.

Elk River, Minnesota

Contact: John Smolenski, NØYR [763] 263-8741

Email: n0yr@arrl.net

VEC: ARRL/VEC

If already licensed, please bring original and copy of current license.

Photo ID is also required. Testing fee for 2008 stays the same at \$14.00.

Saturday February 2nd 2008

Sponsor: ST PAUL RADIO CLUB

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: DAVID M BUENDING

(952)486-0836

Email: AD2B@ARRL.NET

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: ROSEVILLE CITY HALL

2660 COUNTY ROAD C

NW COR CTY RD C & LEXINGTON AV

ROSEVILLE, MN 55101

NET INFORMATION -

Updated July 24, 2007 – Post near your radio for handy reference.

EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NET

Every Tuesday Evening @ 7 PM – 146.565 MHz [Simplex]

Preamble:

This is [your call sign] calling the East Central Minnesota Emergency Preparedness Net. This net meets each Tuesday evening at 7 PM Central Time on a frequency of 146.565 Megahertz for the primary purpose of operator training. This net also provides dissemination of Amateur Radio information and bulletins. All stations are welcome to join the net, and are asked to check in by the use of their call sign only. This is a directed net. Transmit only at the direction of the net control, and please pause between transmissions so others may join our group. Each station will be recognized in the order they check in, and they will be given an opportunity for informal comments. Again, your net control station is [your call sign], my name is [your first name], and I'm located at [your location].

Format:

Standby for Emergency Traffic

Standby for check-ins from Mobile Stations only [Follow by asking for any relays on mobiles]

Standby for Announcements or Bulletins

Standby for general check-ins [Optional - First calls for check-ins by County]

Training and/or Informal Session [Standby periodically for any additional check-ins]

Close the net:

Thank all participants; return the frequency to general amateur use.

FLEA MARKET

New Tech manual with CD from Gordon West. Below cost \$20 with Audio CD. Rob Youcha, Operations AEC with Sherburne County ARES - kc0weo@arrl.net - Cell phone number is 763-228-0843.

I have some 2 meter mobile transceivers here gathering dust. If you have some young Hams that have limited incomes but would like to get on the air, I'm willing to give them one. I would prefer the Wahkon, Isle, or Onamia area come first! Arnie Ryba, K0HWG, Wahkon. 320-495-3586

TUESDAY NIGHT NET HONOR ROLL AND HOLIDAY NET SCHEDULE

Recently, a request was submitted for the **Newsletter** to list all members of the Tuesday Evening Net. The idea has merit as it helps the Net Control stations identify those who check in. A Tuesday Night Net Honor Roll based on the most active recent check-ins is being developed. If YOU want to be on the list, you should have either been a recent participant, or check in at least once between now and the planned January 25th release date of the list.

The final net session for this year was December 18th and produced fifteen check-ins. This was an outstanding turnout to close out the year! If you're not yet on the air, and you live in the East Central Minnesota Net coverage area, make yourself a New Years Resolution to get active and check in to our growing Tuesday evening net.

There will be no Tuesday night net sessions on December 25th in observance of Christmas, or on January 1st in observance of New Years. The net will resume on Tuesday January 8th at 7 PM. We are also looking for more volunteer Net Controls. Let KDØCI know if you want to give it a try. It's not that hard, but more important, it provides training for you as an operator.

LATE BREAKING NEWS

Princeton 895 Repeater Changing Hands

The Princeton Repeater operating at 146.895 MHz [PL 203.5 Hz] is reportedly about to change custodial ownership. Brian Vork, KBØPYI, of Princeton is looking to become the new owner of the repeater and gain control of the present repeater site in Princeton. Vork plans to purchase the repeater from the current custodian Bruce Granger, NØRPP, of Buffalo Minnesota. Granger has already removed some of his 440 repeater equipment from the site.

Highway 23 Communications Corridor Project Update

The pending acquisition of the 146.895 repeater in Princeton by Brian Vork, KBØPYI, may alter the planned layout of communications between Ogilvie and St Cloud. Vork has asked acting Project Coordinator KDØCI to incorporate the 895 machine into the project. This development may provide an alternative means to establish a link from the Ogilvie repeater to the Collegeville repeater, especially if the current plan to link through Foreston does not materialize.

KDØCI acted on the request by forwarding it, along with ideas as to how it might be incorporated, to the other key members of the project for consideration.

Packet Node Updates

WBØOFB reports that the MNASK Packet Node at Askov is back up and operational. You'll recall the MNASK site was burglarized back in October, with several pieces of equipment stolen.

KCØYBX reports that the KCØYUE-1 Packet Node at Milaca is now up and running full time.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The **KDØCI Radio Newsletter** is a free Amateur Radio information publication for Eastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin, and distributed monthly [or more frequently if required] by email to amateur radio operators and clubs, public service officials, and other interested parties. Permission is granted to subscribers to reprint this newsletter for distribution to others. Material herein may be used elsewhere as long as this newsletter is referenced as the source. Comments, questions, etc for this newsletter are welcome.

Send your comments, as well as any "newsworthy" or "for sale" items for inclusion to either of my email addresses. The deadline for submitting material for the **Newsletter** is the 20th of the month.

Primary Email Address: kd0ci@arrl.net [proxy server for kdzeroci@g.com] Alternate: kd0ci@yahoo.com

MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

73,

Kenny Broshofske KDØCI