

Basic Repeater Operation

Waller County ARES training material used with permission from Christine Smith, N5CAS.

1. **Use minimum power.** You may run the risk of keying more than one repeater, causing unnecessary QRM. Low power also conserves batteries.
2. **Use simplex**, whenever possible.
3. **Observe the “pause” procedure between exchanges.** When it is your turn to transmit, after the transmitting station stands by, count to two or three before pressing your transmit switch.
4. **Listen much, transmit little.** Don't tie up the repeater with idle chatter.
5. **Monitor local ARES net frequency.**
6. **Think before you talk.** Stick to the facts, control your emotions.
7. **Articulate, don't slur.** Speak close to your mike, but talk across it, not into it. Keep your voice down. Talk slowly, calmly – this is the mark of an experienced communicator.

Basic Disaster Communications

1. **Keep the QRM down.** If you're not sure you should transmit, don't. A headset will help.
2. **Monitor established disaster frequencies.** The Texas ARES frequencies are _____ during the day and 3.873 HZ during the night.
3. **Avoid spreading rumors.** All addressed transmissions should be officially authenticated as to their source. These transmissions should be repeated word for word, if at all, and only when specifically authorized.
4. **Authenticate all messages.** Amateurs should avoid initiating disaster or emergency traffic themselves. We do the communicating, the agency officials we serve supply the content of the communications.
5. **Strive for efficiency.** Instead of operating your own station full time at the expense of your health and efficiency, it is much better to serve a shift at one of the best-located and best-equipped stations. Allow others to relieve you and get some rest between your shifts.
6. **Select the mode and band to suit the need.** It is normal to believe your favorite mode and band is superior to others, but the merits of a particular band or mode in a communications emergency should be evaluated impartially. There is, of course, no alternative to using what happens to be available, but there are ways to optimize available communications.
7. **Use all communications channels intelligently.** Amateur Radio is a secondary communications means; normal channels are primary and should be used if available.

8. **Don't "broadcast".** While it is true that the general public may be listening, our transmissions are not and should not be made for that purpose.

9. **NTS and ARES leadership coordination.** Within the disaster area itself, the ARES is primarily responsible for emergency communications support. The first priority of those NTS operators who live in or near the disaster area is to make their expertise available to their Emergency Coordinator (EC) where and when needed.