



Seattle
Auxiliary Communications Services
(ACS)

Media Information Release:

July "Hubs and Spokes" Communications Exercise

SEATTLE AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE RADIO OPERATORS AND NEIGHBORHOOD HUBS TO PARTICIPATE IN "HUBS AND SPOKES" EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILL

Amateur ("Ham") Radio Operators and Neighborhood Hub Volunteers To Deploy Across City To Test Emergency and Priority Message Handling For Simulated Day 6 of Earthquake Aftermath

Saturday July 29, 2017 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Attention: Assignment Editors

Recommended photo and sound opportunities. Location: Multiple (see below)

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Seattle, July 29, 2017 — The Seattle Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS), a volunteer organization operating under the auspices of the Seattle Office of Emergency Management, and the Seattle Emergency Communication Hubs, a grass-roots, neighborhood network of community members,, , will jointly conduct a citywide communications exercise called "Hubs and Spokes" on Saturday, July 29, between 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM. The drill, which is part of the "Cascadia Rising" exercise series, simulates Day 6 in the aftermath of a catastrophic earthquake, with challenges including damaged or destroyed infrastructure, widespread medical casualties, and reduced volunteer capabilities due to fatigue and resource constraints. Because the Hubs are the major resource for neighborhood situational awareness and resource coordination, smooth communications between the Hubs, ACS, and the city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are a must.

The key goals of the exercise, which will be observable at multiple locations, are the following:

- Activate several neighborhood Emergency Communication Hubs and Seattle ACS, and simulate activation of the EOC, with emphasis on reliable, efficient, accurate message management and documentation. The exercise participants will use voice as well as data communications via radio, throughout the city as well as with regional EOCs and communications teams.
- Demonstrate, practice, and assess the ability to communicate up and down the various levels of the response structure, based on the Incident Command System (ICS), which spells out a hierarchical, yet flexible, means of managing emergency situations.
- Build strong working relationships among Emergency Communication Hub members and ACS members, through team problem solving and practice.
- Conduct the exercise as a “field classroom” providing on-site training and mentoring for volunteers at each organizational level.

Exercise Scenario

The exercise imagines that a catastrophic earthquake hit the Puget Sound area mid-day on Monday, July 24th, causing major damage to infrastructure and widespread casualties. For the *Hubs and Spokes* drill, it is now the morning of July 29th—day 6 of the disaster. Despite several aftershocks, many of the major infrastructural problems have received initial treatment from City departments, so attention is now being directed to neighborhood needs.

In this type of disaster, the neighborhood Hubs would mobilize immediately to assist with the immediate needs of residents, especially those not reached by regular emergency services. However, as the days after the event go by, as simulated in this exercise, resources may run low and volunteer availability and energy will flag.

The ACS would also have activated just after the initial temblor, with sector sites around the city providing situation reports and helping coordinate emergency responses. Neighborhood communication is one of several missions ACS may be asked to assist with during a disaster. In the exercise scenario, ACS operations have narrowed to two sites, one in the north end of the city and one in the south. The EOC would be active from just after the quake and would remain in operation until conditions stabilize and recovery is underway.

“Neighborhoods are one of the most important levels of cooperation in response to a disaster. Blocks can help on a smaller scale, but in a major disaster, people will need to go to neighborhood gathering places to find access to information and start matching resources and skills to what is needed,” said Cindi Barker, one of Seattle’s Hub Captains. “The average citizen won’t be able to get in touch with the city for information, but most will be able to make it to their local Hub. Practice drills like this help build the relationships between neighbors who will be on the scene and allow us to practice the relationship and interaction between official City agencies and the grassroots folks who are responding to the disaster.”

“Hubs and Spokes is the latest in a series of emergency exercises that have helped our membership continually hone their skills and upgrade, deploy, and test their equipment,” said Mark Sheppard, founder and director of ACS. “After each exercise, we conduct a ‘hot wash’ that identifies key areas of focus for the next exercise. This is critical to improving our ability to be effective in the immediate—as well as ongoing—aftermath of a disaster.” The radio operators will keep records of signal quality, message successes or failures, and other relevant operational data for the after-exercise analysis.

While most residents will likely be unaware of the exercise, the public is welcome to observe the field operations on the 29th. Participants will operate at the following locations:

Hubs

Broadview Lutheran Memorial Church: 13047 Greenwood Ave N

Lake City Fred Meyer south parking lot: 13000 Lake City Way NE

Victory Heights Park: 1737 NE 106th St

Maple Leaf Park: 1020 NE 82nd St

Loyal Heights Playfield: 2101 NW 77th St

Phinney Community Center: 6532 Phinney Avenue N

West Magnolia Playfield: 32th Ave W & W Smith St

Alaska Junction Hope Lutheran Church: 4456 42nd Ave SW

High Point Neighborhood House: 6400 Sylvan Way SW

E.C. Hughes Playground: 29th Ave SW & SW Holden St

Rainier Beach Community Club VFW Hall: 6038 S. Pilgrim **(Seattle ACS PIO present)**

For more information about Seattle’s Emergency Communication Hubs, please visit

<http://seattleemergencyhubs.org/>

For more information about Seattle ACS, please visit <https://seattleacs.org>

For more information about Amateur Radio, please visit the American Radio Relay League at

<https://arrl.org>

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