

**WILSON COUNTY  
AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE**

**BASIC STRUCTURE**

Wilson County ARES is staffed by Amateur Radio Operators in/around Wilson County. Agencies that we serve rely upon us to provide backup communications support during activations and drills. We do this primarily for State and County Emergency Management, and by direction, a variety of agencies like the Red Cross and even private companies. We also provide valuable weather information to the National Weather Service.

ARES provides emergency communications when other systems fail or become overloaded. We can do this because we operate individual, self-contained stations that do not rely on power grids or the telephone network. We can communicate locally, across the state, or around the world. Although Amateur Radio operations may attract media attention, operators are not required to give interviews. We do not give reporters the contents of any messages or the specifics of any communication in progress. If the media requests information, we will direct them to the Wilson County EOC's Public Information Officer.

The basic structure of ARES is operations and all the hams who man the EOC's, Command Posts, Staging Area, shelters and anywhere else we get sent to provide communications. Each county has a Emergency Coordinator (EC) in charge of the ARES group. Working with the EC are Assistant EC's who may have many additional responsibilities.

North Carolina ARES is divided into three Branches, and 15 Areas. This division mirrors the way North Carolina Emergency Management has divided the state. Wilson County is in Area 7, which is in the Central Branch. Area 7 has an Area District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) and 2 Assistant District Emergency Coordinators (ADEC). The Central Branch has an Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator (ASEC). Overseeing ARES for the Section is the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC). A Section Manager (SM), is in charge of all ARRL Field Operations, including ARES and is the only elected position in the section. All other ARES positions are filled by appointment.

SKYWARN is a part of ARES, but it follows geographical divisions set up by the National Weather Service, so it does not fit the ARES structure conveniently. Central Carolina SKYWARN is covered by local ARES volunteers.

Wilson County ARES volunteers are FEMA trained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The main job of ARES is staffing the ham station at the EOC, which is located at 1817 Glendale Ave, Wilson, NC. In addition, hams may be located at Command Posts and Staging Areas around the county, at shelters, and others areas such as fire stations, hospitals and schools.

Although ARES is part of the ARRL Field Organization, we do not need to be a member of the ARRL or a local radio club to participate. Amateur Radio is an all-volunteer effort. There is no pay for this service and most use their own equipment.