



Tales of the I.C.E. Man

I.C.E. - In Case of Emergency

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Communication is Critical

Before, during and after disasters, communication is important in terms of how well we bounce back. This relates to families as well as to government and businesses.

One way to improve communication in the family is to sit down to dinner together. When you do, talk about some of the things going on in the world and how they relate to your family's emergency preparedness. Talk about events like the tornado that hit Aumsville or the winter storms that are impacting so much of the rest of the country right now.

Talk about your out-of-town contact for your family – that person to call when local calls aren't working well. Sometimes you can get through to New Jersey, when you can't reach your neighbor down the street.

These are also good times to tell your kids about the hard times you survived as a youth. It lets them know that they can get through hard times too, like the times you walked 2 miles to school in hip-deep snow, going uphill both ways.

Communication helps us to be **Ready, Willing, and Able**.

Take "5" to Survive –

If you find it difficult to set aside time to prepare for emergencies, you're not alone. This year get prepared in small steps. Here are a few easy 5-minute projects:

- Decide on an out-of-town emergency contact for your family.
- Call your out-of-town emergency contact. Let them know that in a disaster/emergency your family will make every effort to check in with them to let them know your family's status.
- Talk to your family about who your out-of-town emergency contact is, when to call them in an emergency or disaster, and why.
- If regular family dinners don't work for your family, discuss having a time each week when you can get together to talk about what is going on in your lives. Be sure to have refreshments.
- Consider getting your amateur radio license. Talk with Neil Shannon (neilshnn@msn.com) or James Bryant (kd7wzi@arrl.net 971-645-7439) to learn more.

We All need to be **Ready, Willing, and Able** when the time comes to take care of ourselves and our families.

Communication and Disasters

Following a series of catastrophic fires in California in the early 1970's emergency managers determined that response problems were often the result of communications and/or management deficiencies. As a result, the Incident Command System (ICS) came into existence. One of the goals of ICS is to improve communications so that emergency responders and incident commanders can get the information needed to effectively manage and respond to disasters or emergencies.

Jan. 13, 1982 - as a result of an Air Florida crash in Washington DC, 70 people lost their lives, even though emergency responders quickly arrived. One problem – they couldn't communicate well together. On the other hand, after American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon on **Sep. 11, 2001**, 900 responders from 50 agencies, using ICS, were able to communicate well with one another. Progress is being made.

The City of Sherwood also uses ICS in its emergency response planning. Additionally, its police, fire, and public works responders all use a common radio system managed by Washington County that allows responders from many different agencies to communicate well together.

Amateur Radio (often referred to as HAM Radio) is an excellent communications tool. Following the gale-force windstorms that racked the Oregon coast in December 2007, amateur radio operators were a primary resource for communications for emergency responders. Here in Sherwood, one man and his wife actually got their licenses and HAM radios so they can communicate with each other when their cell phones don't work.

Did you know that when cell-phone calls won't go through (fast busy), text messages often will?

Social media like Facebook and Twitter are also evolving as new tools for communications in disasters. During the disastrous fires last year that devastated areas around Boulder, Colorado, Twitter "Tweets" provided excellent information and pictures that were valuable to emergency responders and others.

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It is Always easier to Prepare than to Repair.

Good Links

Learn more about **Amateur Radio** - [ARRL](http://www.arrl.org) or Washington County [ARES](http://www.washingtoncountyares.org)

History of ICS – [Wikipedia article](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incident_Command_System)

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