



## Emergency Communications

As you know Amateur Radio can make boating more fun by providing an easy to use communications medium that can span hundreds of miles and easily network with other boaters. Another application is emergency communications. Many local (Puget Sound) emergency officials have been re-examining their communications plans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. There is a high probability that the next earthquake will disable the existing communications infrastructure - much like what happened in the South East. Harold Kramer offered a great summary of the value and reason to get a license (WJ1B, from the ARRL) during his testimony to congress on September 29, 2005. "The principal reason why Amateur Radio works when other communications systems fail during natural disasters is that Amateur Radio is not infrastructure-dependent, and is decentralized. Amateurs are trained in emergency communications. They are disciplined operators, and their stations are, in general, portable and reliable. High-frequency Amateur Radio communications, used substantially in this emergency communications effort, require no fixed repeaters, cable or wire lines. Portable repeaters for VHF and UHF communications can be provided via mobile facilities (many Amateur Radio groups deployed communications vans in the Gulf Coast for precisely this purpose) in affected areas instantly. There are now approximately 670,000 licensees of the FCC in the Amateur Service, which assures the presence of Amateur stations in most areas of the country. Emergency communications are conducted not only by voice, but also by high-speed data transmissions using state-of-the-art digital communications software known as WinLink. As Motorola's Director of Communications and Public Affairs stated earlier this month: "Amateur Radio communications benefit us all by having a distributed architecture and frequency agility that enables you to set up faster in the early phases of disaster

recovery and can provide flexible and diverse communications... Motorola believes that the Amateur Radio spectrum provides valuable space for these important communications." Your SYC Amateur Radio Committee is starting to review and plan how the 100 or so Amateur Radio operators in the club can assist in a major emergency, e.g., registration in ARES, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service.

## Licensing - Get your license this winter

You can get your license this winter by taking a class at SYC offered on January 7th and 14th. The two-day class will include a copy of "Now You're Talking!" by the ARRL - one of the most popular beginners study guides. Study from this book, and pass your 35-question license exam. Inside you'll find friendly, easy-to-understand theory and rules. It also includes the latest Technician class question pool (Element 2) with answer key. Learn how to select and set up radios, accessories and antennas for your ham radio station. It will also guide you through your first contacts on all the popular operating modes, including FM repeaters and packet radio. Practical information every beginning ham needs is presented clearly and simply, in small doses. "Now You're Talking!" will show you how to enjoy ham radio to the fullest! Remember - no Morse code test is required for the Technician license. If you are interested in the class and the book - you can sign up at the Front Desk. If you cannot attend the class, you can get on the email list to be notified about potential future classes and education materials - send me an email: chapin@activesoft.net with the subject line SYC Radio Class Info.

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W7SYC - For more information about the Seattle Yacht Club Amateur Radio Committee: send an email to [radio@seattleyachtclub.org](mailto:radio@seattleyachtclub.org).  
73s

