

# **Sarasota County EOC Communications Exercise - March 8, 2008**

On March 8, Sarasota County conducted a communications test at their backup Emergency Operations Center.

In the event that the primary EOC must be evacuated, a Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan is in place to set up a local school as a backup EOC to take over and continue operations.

This exercise was a backup systems check, which consisted of setting up a portable server to handle computer traffic, hooking up phone lines, setting up a portable 911 computer system to handle police and fire dispatch, and setting up and operating a portable amateur radio station. A permanent dual-band antenna had already been installed at this location, so our objective was to hook up one of our portable "jump kits" and check coverage to our emergency repeaters as well as on simplex.

A few days earlier, we announced that we would be running tests, and what frequencies we would be using. We asked for stations to check into one, or more, repeaters, to let us know things worked. We would also ask them for their 6 digit grid squares, so we could plot the stations worked.

At 10 AM, we began our exercise, by looking for check ins on the first repeater, before proceeding down the list to the next ones.

The repeaters used, were:

146.730 MHz, Sarasota - 20 check ins  
145.130 MHz, Laurel - 8 check ins  
146.390 MHz, Sarasota - 16 check ins  
147.120 MHz, Port Charlotte, 4 check ins  
443.550 MHz, Sarasota - 6 check ins  
442.300/444.600/444.875 MHz (linked), Sarasota, Bradenton, Murdock - 9 check ins  
146.580 MHz simplex - 6 check ins

We also made a contact on packet, and sent some traffic using Winlink.

We had check ins from Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco County.

We were pleased to see that everything worked well, and we were able to establish contact on all the desired repeaters.

Special thanks to the Sarasota Emergency Radio Club, the North Port Amateur Radio Club, and Tom, K4TAP, for the use of their repeaters. Also thanks to all the stations who took a few minutes to check in with us, and to Bob, K9SRQ, for assisting with setup and operating.

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