

## **Siesta Key Chapel Hurricane Drill - April 20, 2008**

On Sunday, April 20, 2008, several ACS members supported a Hurricane Drill put on by the Siesta Key Chapel (Sarasota).

After church services, Emergency Management Chief, Ed McCrane, held a Hurricane Seminar with church members. At the end of the question and answer session (and almost as if on cue), Ed received a message that "Hurricane Kathi" was approaching Sarasota ... and the drill began.

Church membership had been broken up into 9 "clusters" or areas of the County. The cluster leaders began taking attendance of members in that area ... which members were accounted for (those who attended services that morning) and which weren't.

For those members who could not be contacted by telephone, a team was put together to go out and check on their condition. Ham radio was used to communicate between the mobile teams and the church. The mobile teams would report on bridge and road status along the way, and once they reached the members home, report their status, commercial power availability, if they planned to stay or evacuate, and any special needs they may have.

A "jump kit" and antenna was set up and used as the "base" station at the church, and several of the dual-band cache radios were issued out for the mobile teams. We initially used the EOC 443.550 repeater, but ran into problems copying the mobile stations. We switched over to the 146.730 repeater to complete the exercise. We'll have to run some tests, to determine why the 440 repeater didn't work as well as expected (which is why drills are used to find and fix problems). It may have been the HT's in the vehicles (no external antennas), or generally poor repeater coverage in that area.

Overall, the church organizers seemed to be pleased with the results. They got to check their plan and see how well it works.

Amateurs participating in this exercise, include:

George, K5KG (planner)

Joe, KG4ZSO

Don, K8SXO

Billy, K8OQW

Austin, WR4AP

Ed, K8DSS (ACS)

Bob, K9SRQ (ACS)

Ron, WD4AHZ (ACS)

Thanks to those folks who helped.

Ron, WD4AHZ  
EC, Sarasota CountyS