

A.R.E.S. - Let's do this right!!!

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Mom always said, “If you're gonna do something..... do it right”. Well, mom was correct. So..... now we are members of A.R.E.S and we owe it to ourselves and the community we serve to do this right. Anything that's worth doing is worth doing well.

The following is taken from the FCC website:

The FCC established amateur radio as a voluntary, non-commercial, radio communications service. It allows licensed operators to improve their communications and technical skills, while providing the nation with a pool of trained radio operators and technicians who can provide essential communications during emergencies.

Did you notice the last part of the description? Here it is again: “..... while providing the nation with a pool of trained radio operators and technicians who can provide essential communications during emergencies. “ Not just emergencies, but disasters also. But..... let's look at a very key word in this description.... “TRAINED”. In fact, it implies training again when it says “ to improve their communications and technical skills”. We know that to “improve” means training and practice. We notice that this training and practice is needed to “..... provide essential communications during emergencies”. The word “essential” could also easily mean “critical”. From this.... we can extrapolate that training and practice is **CRITICAL for emergency communications. I'll repeat it again for posterity “Training and practice is **CRITICAL** for emergency communications”. Amateur Radio Emergency Services is virtually useless in emergencies and disasters without continuing training and practice.**

Perhaps you have had a co-worker or a very young child offer to help you do something. Their offer to help was very genuine and heartfelt, but they have no training or experience in what you are trying to get done.

While they are trying their best to help, they are getting in the way, slowing things down, possibly damaging or destroying things, and at the very least making you work much longer than you would have without their “help”.

This is exactly the same for the A.R.E.S volunteer who is deployed out to help in an emergency or disaster and who is not well trained and prepared. A.R.E.S members who are NOT well trained and well prepared when sent out to help, are guaranteed to be viewed as a problem that made things worse, were under foot, annoying, and should never be called on for “help” ever again.

Some A.R.E.S members might think it is fine to just 'squeak by' with the minimum training that is required. Well..... imagine how things would be in the United States of America if all of the students that graduate from our schools 'squeaked by' and graduated with a grade of a D minus. Just one notch above failure, but they 'squeaked by'. How would life in America be? How would an emergency or a disaster be if the A.R.E.S member that responds out to help 'squeaked by' with the minimum requirements and had very little training??? Would you want such a person, however good their intentions to help, would you want them “helping” in your community???

A.R.E.S needs LOTS of good hearted, licensed, well trained amateur radio operators who want to help out in emergencies and disasters and who want to be active and participate in A.R.E.S events. Not just emergencies and disasters, but community and public service events too. People who volunteer and show up when they say they will show up. People who can be counted on. People who can be trusted. People who you would want to be helping you, if you needed help.

Don't wait for someone else to drag you kicking and screaming into being prepared and trained. Step up to the plate and search out the training yourself if it is not easily there for you. All of the efforts you put in into your own training will pay large dividends when things go bad. As a firefighter with nearly 30 years on the job, I can tell you that failure of good communications is almost always a major factor in why things didn't go well on an emergency scene. Good training, good decision making, and good communications are CRITICAL in an emergency or disaster.

You are an A.R.E.S volunteer! Train well, be well prepared, gain experience, and take pride in helping and being of service to your community.

Let's do this thing right!!!