

*Pottawattamie County*

*Guide for*

*Net Control Stations*

**Contains;**

- **Net Preambles**
- **Protocols for Pott. Co. ARES Nets**
- **Tips for conducting various types of nets**

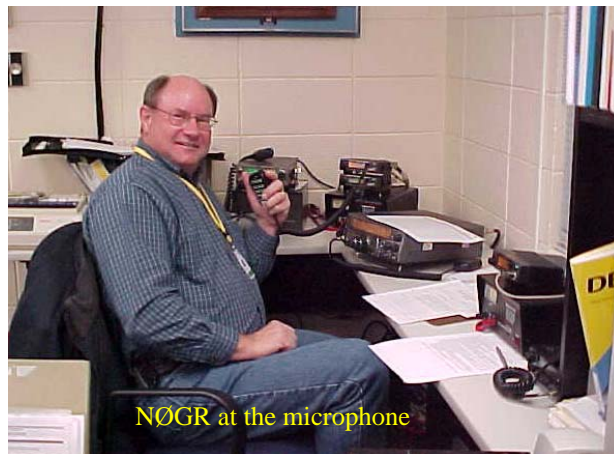
## The Formal ARES Net:

- This is a directed net. It is structured and designed as a training net to foster net discipline. All communications are directed by the **Net Control Station**. These are nets which train for “real emergencies”, and net discipline and protocols become critical in times of an actual event. In times of chaos and crisis, we fall back to the training we have had.
- The official name of the net is **“The Pottawattamie County ARES Net.”**
- The net should start as close to **9pm local time** as possible on Wednesday evening.
- Use the appropriate ARES call sign, **KØPOT**, for the formal net.
- There are two acceptable ways for stations to check into the net
  - 1) One way is to ask them to call **KØPOT**; let the repeater drop; then give their call sign. (Best to start out with this method if you are new to being NCS). This method lessens the possibility of stations doubling with each other.
  - 2) Another way is to ask them to give their call sign only. In this case, they just key the mic and make one transmission. With this method, you go back and check for any doubling by recognizing those stations you heard and then asking if there were any stations who checked in that you didn’t acknowledge. Be prepared to write fast and listen carefully with this method.
- With either method, after you have acknowledged the stations checking in, it is a good idea to ask if there was anyone in that group whose call you missed or messed up. ARES members and Net Control Stations should be proficient in both methods of checking into the net.

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### **Tips for the “Formal” net:**

- **-Give a 30-60 second pause between nets. This gives you a chance to get the other preamble in front of you and prepare for the Informal net.**
- **-When stations list business for the net, consider them as checking into the net: these stations need not check in again during the regular check-in procedure.**
- **-You may ask if someone will back you up as NCS and copy the check-ins along with you. Do this just before beginning to take check-ins.**



## Preamble for the “Formal” Training Net.

- This is KØPOT, Net Control Station for the Pottawattamie County ARES Net on the KØSWI repeater in Council Bluffs, Iowa.
- This net meets every Wednesday at 9pm local time.
- This is the “formal ARES net” and is a directed net. So all traffic will go through the Net Control Station.
- All licensed Amateurs are welcome to check into the net
- My name is (phonetically), and the call is (Kilo- Zero- Papa- Oscar- Tango).
- The purpose of this net is to train operators in communications during a net operation and to share club and ARES information.
- **Optional (Here you can ask for a backup Net Control Station)**
- In the event that the 82 repeater is not operational, we will conduct the Net on a linked repeater system which include:
  - 145.29 (-) repeater in Glenwood,
  - the 442.025 (+) repeater in Minden and
  - the 147.00 (+/-) repeater in Omaha.
  - These repeaters are linked and you can participate in the net by accessing any of these three repeaters.
- An informal net will follow this net. Stations are invited to participate in both.
- If you need to break in with urgent traffic, say “Break Emergency” or Break Priority,” and you will be recognized.
- I’ll start taking check-ins for the net tonight. (Explain how you want stations to check into the net) and indicate if you have traffic for the net.
- (Take check-ins and then break to recognize the stations you heard or to get those you may have missed.
- Then go back and call the stations with announcements or traffic for the net.
- Give another call for any additional check-ins for the net.
- When the list is completed and all business for the net has been taken care of then you can close the net.
- Is there any unfinished or additional business for the net before I close it? I’ll resume calling the informal or comment net after a short break.
- I want to thank SWIARC for the use of the repeater. This is KØPOT clear.

## Informal Net:

General guidelines:

- -This Net is less structured than the ARES Net. You have a lot of flexibility with this part as it is not intended to be a training net.
  - -Use your personal call sign for this Net (KØPOT is only for the Formal Net)
  - -This gives hams a chance to make some comments or observations.
  - -You can use the same check-in list that was generated by the ARES Net and then ask for additional check-ins later during the informal part of the net.
  - -It is important to use people's first names along with their call signs. There is a list of names and call signs you can refer to that you should have before you call the net.
  - -**You can write your own preamble for the Informal Net.** The Formal Net preamble is the only one required to be followed.
  - -I would recommend proposing a question or issue for people to comment on and then add any other comments they may have. A script might go something like this:
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## Suggested preamble for the “Informal or Comment Net”

- This is **(your personal call sign)** beginning the informal or “comment” net.
- I will use the check-in list that I have for the “formal” net and go down that list for comments skipping over those who checked “in and out.”
- **(If you have a suggested topic for discussion, lay it out here)**
- **Then turn the net over to the a person on the list for their comments**
- **Take an occasional standby for additional check-ins for the net.**
- Hearing no more check-ins, I'll go ahead and close the net
- Thanks to all who checked in and to SWIARC for the use of the repeater.
- This net will meet again next Wednesday at 9pm local time.
- This station is secured; the net is secured and the repeater is returned to normal Amateur use.
- **This is (Your personal call sign) Clear!**

## Tips for the “Informal” net:

- -the spirit of this net is to give each person a chance to make any comments they like. You may need to open it up to the net if someone has a question, etc. Be flexible! The function of NCS for this section is to make sure that each station gets a chance to comment. It is not intended to be a “training net.”
- -suggested topics have included: how do you protect your equipment from lightning; what bands do you like to work; when did you get your first license; what call signs have you had in the past, etc.

## The “Call-up” Net:

- A “Stand-by” net is only used in an actual emergency or exercise (drill). You may never have to call this type of net, but you should be familiar with it and how to call it.
- The EC usually asks someone to call a stand-by net.
- This type of net is called to find out who is available to help, when they can help and what equipment is needed.
- The NCS keeps a list of check-ins, along with the above information for each person.

## Preamble for a “Call-up” net:

- **This is KØPOT calling an emergency net session. My name is (phonetically).**
- **Pottawattamie County ARES has been asked to assist with an emergency. (Describe the event and say only what you know for a fact. DO NOT SPECULATE about what happened or what Agencies plan to do.)**
- **Announce repeater status here: closed or semi-open.**
- **At this time, I would like to know who is available to help. Only those who are available to help, give just your call sign now...stations A-Z.**
- **Go back down the list and ask when they are available to help and if they have the communications equipment needed (mobile, hand-held, etc.)**
- **I would ask those of you who are available to stand-by for further information and instructions. This is KØPOT. (Prepare your list to give to the EC or the person who will take over for you).**

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## Tips for the “Call-up” net:

- -Since hams will be listening in at different times, you may want to announce frequently the **status of the repeater** and a **brief summary** of what is happening.
- **-Repeater status** for stand-by nets should normally be “closed” but if information is slow in coming, it could be “semi-open.”
- -After you have conducted the main part of the net, if the wait is getting long, take a stand-by for any additional check-ins and people who may have joined late who are available to help.

## Special Nets:

- Nets may be called for special situations such as a winter storm conditions or providing communications services for the Red Cross or other agencies. The following preamble for a Winter Storm Net and tips were developed in 2005.

### Storm and Road Condition Net Preamble:

- **This is (your call sign) conducting a special weather and road condition net for those out on the road.**
- **I'll take check-ins and any road reports, accident reports, or pertinent information you have for the good of the net.**
- **If you have Emergency or Priority traffic for the net say "Break Emergency" or "Break Priority."**
- **This is a service of Pottawattamie County ARES. My name is (phonetically).**
- **Our intention is to continue the Net until (8:30 AM if morning; 6:00pm if evening) or until all check-ins have reached their destination or are out of repeater range (whichever comes first).**
- **(Begin taking check-ins.)**
- **(Then ask for any road reports)**

### Periodic Net Announcements:

- **This is (Callsign) with a special weather net.**
- **I am taking road condition/ accident or traffic problem reports for the benefit of those on the road so they can avoid problem situations.**
- **Standing by for any additional check-ins or reports.**

### Things to consider:

- Morning Net times (6:00AM – 8:30AM): Evening Net Times (4:00PM – 6:00PM)
- Activate net if 6 inches or more of snow or unusual icy conditions
- Best if there are two NCS operators who can switch off with each other.
- Each NCS needs a current list of check-ins.
- There may be someone at home who can watch one of the TV channels and relay current traffic info over the net.
- Recommend an open link between the two NCS possibly on a 440 frequency
- A count of check-ins should be made to the Net Manager as an ARES Special Net report.

### When things are slow:

- take a roll call of current stations on your list
- announce the repeater status: Semi-open: This repeater is being used for a special weather net, but is not closed completely to normal Amateur use. Stations can use the repeater to call another station and make arrangements to go to another frequency or take care of their business here if brief.
- Remember to reopen the repeater to "normal Amateur use" after the net.

