

# West Contra County Fire Drill

## For West County EMCOMM

August 17, 2019

0900-1300

**Purpose:** West County needs to have an intense communication practice to determine our readiness in case of emergency. This drill will test our communication ability at several levels including FRS, GMRS HAM and Digital. Can we cover west county? Are operators familiar with their radios and the functions? Do we need messaging practice? Are we able to operate under stressful conditions? These are some of the items we need to look at in order to be able to function as a unit in a disaster. Practice is the “oil” that keeps us loose and efficient. We’ll probably make many errors but look at them as learning opportunities.

**Scenario:** State fire officials have stated California is on course for a fire season potentially worse than last year. We have been asked to create and execute a drill that defines areas that could be at risk for a fire in West Contra Costa County. The county OES needs this information to ensure the placement of emergency equipment in areas with projected fire activity. The boundaries for this drill are the SF Bay, Port Costa/Crockett, east shore of San Pablo reservoir and Albany/Tilden Park. We will also check the San Pablo Ave. corridor for possible hazards to commercial assets that would be of use after a disaster. Home Depot, Lucky’s, Safeway and other sources of supplies and necessities for sustaining shelters and victims.

**Tasks:** On drill day, HAM’s, GMRS and FRS equipped volunteers will be dispatched to all parts of west county to survey and report fire conditions in the east bay hills, the San Pablo Ave. corridor and other areas of west county. Four HAM ISP’s and 1 GMRS ISP will receive information from tactical units. Information will be forwarded to the West County ICP and then passed on digitally to the County EOC. The five ICP’s will also have input from any CERT groups that decide to participate with neighborhood checks. We will try to efficiently and expeditiously gather as much information as possible during the three hour time allotment.

### **Preparation:**

HAM operators must have UHF/VHF ability. We will be using the 4C’s 2 meter and 440 repeaters as well as simplex frequencies. All channels used are found in the CCC Sheriff’s Office OP Aid 1 list of suggested frequencies. WCICP will do its best to dispatch operators to sites near their QTH when possible.

GMRS operators will check-in on Channel 21 and receive area and channel assignment from the GRMS ICP. GMRS ops will function in the San Pablo Ave. Corridor from San Pablo to Albany, including the BART Trail, Richmond Annex and Marina Bay.

CERT/FRS operators may join this drill by checking their local neighborhood area for fire opportunities and reporting to their local ICP, HAM or GMRS station.

Incident Commanders will have a group meeting at the beginning of June to discuss ICP setup and requirements. I am leaving it up to the local IC's to select their ICP staff. This will probably be the most difficult part of the exercise. ICP's will be (hopefully) receiving calls from out of west county personnel as well as west county hams.

The exercise is not about trying to make decisions about where fires will happen as much as it is about spotting areas that appear to be fire prone. We will be talking about large areas such as parks hilly acreage, large groves of trees and combustibles near assets such as buildings, water storage tanks, BART and other such locations. CERT's will be assigned to check their neighborhood.

Please refresh your knowledge of ICS forms 205, 213 and 214. They will be collected and used for evaluation of the exercise. I hope everyone will picture the Carr or Tubbs fire from last year and consider what we might have to do to help prevent such a fire in the west county.

**If you wish to take part in this exercise just tune to 444.275MHz, + 82.5PL. Contact Net Control after 0900 on August 17, 2019. You will be given a tactical call sign and be assigned to one of 5 ICP's in west county. Your ICP will have assignments for you.**



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