

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:

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. Send your location to www.4cs.comm@gmail.com and I will send contact information.

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 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 participate please send me an email with your name, call sign, (ham, gmrs or frs) location and whether you have radio equipment. We need scribes and other non-radio help as well. Just add what you are willing to do and we will find something for you.

Thank you for your commitment to serving our community.

73,

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