

Hello everyone!

This is my first entry to our CERT Communications Corner article in our newsletter. I am the new emergency communications manager for our county CERT. I am very comfortable in this position, and looking forward to all of us having fun learning and practicing emergency communications in so many forms unknown to most of us.

I am the semi-new kid on the block for CERT. Some of you know me, some do not. Just a little background: I started in electronics and radios when I was twelve years old. After the 1989 earthquake I got into ham radio while in Ben Lomond in 1990. A year later I joined the Santa Cruz County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). I served as the ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC) in the San Lorenzo Valley for six years before retiring last year. I am still very active in ARES.

I taught ham radio classes solo for six years starting in around 1998, and later was so blessed to have wonderful and caring ARES members join me in teaching Technician and General classes. Teaching is VERY exhausting, and these wonderful people are dedicated to making our communities connected when all else fails.

I joined CERT seven years ago and took the Train the Trainer class as well. I re-certified for CERT a few months ago. So here we are together, going to work out all the confusion, fears, and mysteries of emergency communications in all forms, not just radios! :-). If you would like to know more about me, please feel free to Google on my call sign KO6XX.

I am currently meeting with all CERT Team Leaders, Assistant Team Leaders, and CERT Auxiliary officers one by one. I am hoping to be meeting ALL of you at your CERT team meetings (not just the radio operators) to hear your thoughts and questions, and listen to your communications fears and concerns. Whether we have a radio or not, we are all emergency communicators. If one chooses to not use a radio (which is perfectly fine), it is still very important to know what our radio operators can do for us. You are more than welcome to attend our monthly emergency communications meetings on the last Friday of every month at 19:00 (7:00pm) for one hour, in person or on Zoom. Even if you do not use a radio this is important. :-). I have an open-door policy, so please feel free to email me with your thoughts, concerns, and questions at bob.ko6xx@gmail.com

At our last meeting we covered the importance of having a weather radio. The advantage of having a weather radio and/or a police scanner is gathering information about what is going on around us so we can make better decisions during a weather emergency. Some weather radios have set alerts that can trigger a warning of things that will affect us weather-wise. We will be talking more about the different types of weather radios, and what might be best for us to have. Just because we are not interested in the Multi Use Radio Service (MURS) radio used for CERT or amateur radio (ham radio), does not mean that we can't have a police scanner to monitor at another level the important information we need to make the best decisions for us and our community WHEN there is an emergency (not if, but WHEN). We do not need to have a license to monitor our local police, fire, sheriff, and hams. We will be covering this at the meetings as well.

Ok, you have an open invitation to join us. Please email me at bob.ko6xx@gmail.com if you would like to be part of our CERT communications group. I will be sending out meeting

reminders with the agenda the day before or the day of the meeting. This is like clockwork, and will start promptly at 19:00 so please entertain putting it on your cell calendar. Welcome. And I hope to see you at the meetings.
73 (best wishes in Morse Code).

Bob Fike KO6XX