



# Lexington Leader

SERVING LEE COUNTY, TEXAS



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## Successful Emergency Communication Exercise

Lee County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES), LeeCARES, held a successful emergency communication exercise in Lee County.

This exercise focused on mapping direct communications via amateur radio in Lee County and deployment, setup and use of portable radios and antennas. LeeCARES members were able to successfully communicate, directly or via relays, without a repeater, in an area spanning from Caldwell to Smithville, and Georgetown and Jonah, from Bartlett to South Austin.

LeeCARES members increased their knowledge of the portable radios and were able to successfully resolve issues. This exercise boosted enthusiasm and confidence to be able to communicate throughout the Lee County and beyond in case the regular means of communications fails during an emergency or disaster.

Our members became aware that portable radio antennas need to be raised higher above the ground, for better communications. As a

consequence of this exercise, one of our members has developed a prototype that was operational by the next day. Improvements are being made to ease the antenna setup.

### LeeCARES next steps:

Increase antenna height while still maintaining a

single person to set up within three minutes.

Develop a method to erect an efficient antenna at the Lee County Emergency Operation Center or any location that may be used as a Command Post.

Future exercises are planned.

Four Lee County

operators participated, two from their base stations in their homes and two from their two personal vehicles with portable radios and handhelds. Furthermore, about ten operators from four adjacent counties, Williamson, Burleson, Bastrop, and Travis, checked in and relayed messages. The

exercise lasted 4 hours.

The Lee County Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (LeeCARES) is sponsored by the American Radio Relay League. The purpose of LeeCARES is to furnish emergency communication when regular communication fails or is inadequate during

natural or man-made disasters. LeeCARES consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.