

# How to get Involved with LAARES

(What is LAARES? See the FAQ.)

1. Get your amateur radio license
  - a. What is an amateur radio license? An amateur radio license allows you to operate radio transmitting equipment on certain frequencies.
  - b. Why do I need one? You are required to have an FCC license to operate on the frequencies used by LAARES.
  - c. How do I get one? See <http://www.hello-radio.org/becomeaham.html>
2. Join LAARES
  - a. What is LAARES? LAARES serves Los Altos by helping to recruit, train, and maintain a crew of amateur radio operators ready to provide emergency communication services in a time of need. Part of the training is providing communication support for community events as requested by the city.
  - b. Why do I need to join? LAARES is the organization for ARES/RACES in Los Altos. What is ARES/RACES? See the FAQ.
  - c. How do I join? Contact Tom Smith at [tom@halibut.com](mailto:tom@halibut.com) with your name, call sign, address, phone number (home and cell) and email address. There are no dues. Tom will work with you to fill out the necessary paperwork (including a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) form and having your picture taken for a city-issued Photo ID card.
3. Once I join LAARES, what am I expected to do?
  - a. Keep your radio charged and ready for use at any time.
  - b. Participate in the weekly net as often as possible.
    - i. What is the weekly net? The weekly net is an on-air meeting of amateur radio operators interested in emergency communications. The net helps train and prepare operators for actual emergencies. The net is comprised of two parts, a general meeting and a local meeting. The general meeting is held at 8:00 PM on Mondays on frequency 145.270 MHz, minus offset, 224.140 MHz, minus offset, 440.800 MHz, positive offset, all use 100.0 Hz tone . After a short while the local nets begin. The Los Altos portion occurs on simplex frequency 146.595 MHz, simplex. The script for the general net may be found at <http://www.specsnet.org/netscript.html> and the script for the local net is at <http://www.laares.org/mscript.pdf>.
  - c. Review the training offered by LAARES, the County ARES/RACES group and other cities, and consider attending some classes to improve your skill set.
4. Why do I need to participate? The net serves the purpose of getting to know each other, becoming familiar with equipment, and practicing operating skills before an emergency. When an incident happens, it's too late to practice!
5. How do I participate?
  - a. Tune to the frequencies above and announce your presence when the local roll call is given. New hams are welcome and don't worry about making a mistake. You can also sign up and visit a net control center to watch or serve as net control operator.
  - b. Participate in as many of the quarterly training drills as you can.
  - c. Get ICS trained . What is ICS? How do I get trained? See the FAQ.
  - d. Have fun! And don't worry about mistakes**
6. What other things can I do?
  - a. Get CERT trained (recommended but not required) See the FAQ
  - b. Join SPECS (recommended but not required) See the FAQ