

ARRL Delaware Section Manager

Newsletter – March 2026

Greetings from Sussex County

Another newsletter, another winter storm. Winter Storm Fernando brought several days of disruption across Delaware, with parts of Sussex County seeing nearly 19 inches of snow. Many residents were without power for extended periods, and several tower sites went offline when generators either failed to start or were not available. A small portable generator can be useful, but many of us face restrictions on their use. Whole-house units with automatic transfer switches are ideal, especially when they start themselves during an outage. It's also worth remembering that carbon monoxide from generators is deadly; the National Hurricane Center noted last September that more people died from CO poisoning than from the hurricane itself.

For amateur radio operators, a pre-storm checklist is invaluable. Fully charged HTs and portable battery packs—such as the LiFePO4 batteries many of us use for POTA and other field operations—are perfect for maintaining communications during multi-day events. These power sources allow us to stay active on SKYWARN and other nets even when commercial power is out.

Emergency Operations Centers across the state were activated, either in person or remotely, to manage the storm's impacts. Shelters opened in at least two counties to provide warmth and safety for residents without heat or whose homes were damaged. Downed trees created challenges statewide, requiring coordinated multi-agency efforts to clear roads and restore power. As amateur radio operators, we continue to serve as examples of preparedness and resilience within our communities.

ARRL Grassroots Effort to Eliminate HOA Prohibitions – GMRS users can now send letters

Last September the ARRL launched a grassroots campaign aimed at securing the passage of federal legislation that would grant Amateur Radio Operators the same rights to install antennas on their property as those enjoyed by users of TV antennas, wireless internet, and flagpoles. The online system where an amateur radio licensee can generate letters has received nearly 160,000 letters to be delivered to our congressional representatives. This effort is alive and well and still moving forward. The ARRL site has links for sending the letter in English and Spanish. And now GMRS users can also send letters via the same site.

The ARRL is also encouraging radio clubs to provide letters of support, and is urging each club officer to sign the letters. There are instructions for clubs via the site on how to complete the letter and a sample letter for clubs that should be customized with their information.

Visit <https://www.arrl.org/current-legislation> to get links for all of the items. If you have not sent in your letter, do so as soon as you can. It takes less than 30 seconds.

ARRL America250 Worked All States (WAS) Award for 2026 W1AW/X Update

The ARRL Delaware Section will have use of the W1AW/3 callsign for two weeks of the year. The first week will cover the Delaware State Convention/Hamfest on April 18, 2026. The week will run from Wednesday, April 15 to Tuesday, April 21. The second week will cover December 7 which is Delaware Day. December 7, 1787 is when Delaware became the first state. This second week will run from Wednesday, December 2 to Tuesday, December 8.

The section will be using Ham-qtv.com as our scheduling site. After you create a free account, you will be able to request to operate in the event and then will be able to request 1-hour blocks to operate W1AW/3 while in Delaware for those two weeks. For those who will be operating K2E in the 13 Colonies event the first week of July will also be using this site for scheduling. There are no instructions on the sites' use but I have created a quick cheat sheet. The document can be downloaded from the [ARRLDelawareSection.groups.io](https://www.ARRLDelawareSection.groups.io) site.

ARRL Resets Section Managers Election Cycles

Currently the ARRL Field Organization runs election cycles near year-round. With 71 Section Manager positions, this was getting a bit tedious. Although more than half of the elections the incumbent ran unopposed thus not needing an election, many did require candidate statements, ballots to be sent and received and the Field Organization counting and confirming results. A decision was made to hold all elections once per year in July. Normally Delaware's Section Manager term started on January 1 every other year. With its change, Delaware's Section Manager term will now start on July 1 (2028). So, this adds 6 months to my current term as Section Manager. My term will now run from January 2026 to July 1, 2028 making the term 30 months instead of the normal 24.

ARRL Delaware Section Staff Attend Board of Electrical Examiners to Oppose Low-Voltage Regulation Change (exerts from Press Release)

Representatives of the ARRL Delaware Section attended the Delaware Board of Electrical Examiners meeting on February 17 to formally oppose proposed regulatory changes that could unintentionally restrict amateur radio operations involving low-voltage communications equipment.

The proposed revisions, currently under consideration by the Board, would broaden the scope of work requiring state required inspection. ARRL Delaware Section leadership expressed concern that any change to the current regulation could be interpreted to include routine amateur radio activities—despite amateur radio being federally regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

“Every amateur radio operator is licensed by the FCC at one of three levels, and each level requires testing on electrical and operational safety. These exams cover electrical safety, RF exposure, interference mitigation, grounding, bonding, and mechanical safety. Safety is built into our licensing from the very beginning,” said Keller, ARRL Delaware Section Manager. “For decades, amateur radio operators have safely installed their own antennas, feedlines, low-voltage/energy rotor controls, audio wiring, and computer cabling. Requiring a licensed electrician to perform these specialized, low-voltage/energy tasks would impose unnecessary cost and burden, with no demonstrated safety benefit.”

ARRL Delaware Section representatives emphasized that amateur radio operators routinely support emergency management agencies, the National Weather Service's SKYWARN program, community shelters, hospitals and public-service events. They noted that the proposed regulatory language could inadvertently hinder these volunteer-driven services by imposing inspection requirements never intended for non-commercial, federally regulated radio operations.

During the meeting, ARRL Delaware Section staff outlined the potential impacts of the proposed changes, provided technical clarification on amateur radio's operational scope, and encouraged the Board to collaborate with the amateur radio community to avoid unintended consequences. The Section will continue to monitor the regulatory process and provide input as needed.

The next meeting of the Delaware Board of Electrical Examiners is this Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 08:30. Visit [Public Meeting Calendar: State of Delaware](#) for more information on attending or joining the meeting virtually. The initial proposal can be found at [Delaware Regulations - Regulation](#) however it has been changed and the wording not set. A Sub-committee to handle this regulation will be discussed at the March 4 meeting.

Sussex County ARES

February 11 was our bimonthly Hybrid Meeting at Areen's in Georgetown. The speaker we had scheduled to present about the Hurricane Watch Net had to cancel. Pat, KW3Z, provided some data on winter and summer storms.

Two regularly scheduled 2m Training Nets were run via the Millsboro 147.090 repeater. The net on the 18th Pat, KW3Z ran and had an interesting discussion on emergency power backup. Great timing as it was just before Winter Storm Fernando.

Sussex County ARES ran a Skywarn NET for Winter Storm Fernando. The Millsboro repeater lost power with the generator not starting. The Skywarn Net was then moved to its secondary repeater, the North Seaford 146.715. Reports were taken on the analog repeaters and via the Skywarn 759 DMR Talkgroup.

Sussex ARES has the following events scheduled for March and April 2026

March

3/4 – 2m Training Net – 147.090 Millsboro Repeater, Steven, KC3DSO NCS

3/7-8 – ARRL DX Phone Contest. Although not an ARES event, running contests provide superb experience for Net Control duties.

Hybrid Meeting – Arena's in Georgetown- 6:30PM – Hurricane Watch Net

3/18 – Zoom Training, 7pm, link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84627190775?pwd=SRsvDUUpU4ozlB48s86165pn2uP41fk.1>

3/24 – ARRL Training Center – 8pm, Online, How to make a rugged 2m VHF Ground Plane Antenna, 1 hour, to register visit [On The Air Live: VHF Ground Plane Antenna | ARRL](#)

April

4/1 – 2m Training Net – 147.090 Millsboro Repeater, Mike, N3MRM, NCS

4/4 – Sussex ARES 2Q Hospital Drill, All locations, 0830-1330. Contact Steven, KC3DSO if you want to participate.

4/8 – Sussex ARES Hybrid Meeting – 6pm, Arena's in Georgetown, PowerPole LED Go No Go tester assembly. \$8 each kit with \$ going to the Section's Youth Initiative.

4/15 - 2m Training Net – 147.090 Millsboro Repeater, Steven, KC3DSO, NCS

4/25 – Sussex ARES Support of the 2026 Ocean to Bay Bike Tour. 13 stations staffed around Southern Sussex County. Contact Steven, KC3DSO, kc3dso@gmail.com to sign up. New operators welcome.

Sussex ARES runs a drill every 90 days and runs/participates in other events during the year. Want to be a part of an active ARES group? You don't have to live in Sussex County to be a part of the team. Send an email to kc3dso@gmail.com.

Grid Down, Mic Up – EmComm Topics

WinLink Catalog Requests

WinLink Catalog Information Requests continue to be one of the most useful tools in our emergency communications toolkit.

A Winlink Catalog Information Request is a message request that is generated by Winlink Express. Once you send the message, your next download picks up the response for each information request in the message. There are many categories of requests in the catalog that can be made. Each category has multiple specific inquiries that can be made.

Some examples are:

- Weather Maps and Text Forecasts for most areas (you can now request Delaware WX)
- Lightning Maps
- Maritime HF Nets and Frequencies
- Satellite images
- Satellite Keplerian Elements
- ARRL Newsletter and Bulletins
- Propagation and Solar Forecasts

For example, suppose you wanted to view the weather for one or all of Delaware's counties. Under "Settings" scroll down to "Winlink Catalog Requests." Under the left column heading of "Categories" you will see a huge list of docs you can request via the WinLink System. Scroll down to "WX_US_DE" and click it. The right column will populate with the docs or info you can request under this category. You will see the Inquiry ID (the doc name WinLink needs to retrieve the correct file) and Description and the Size. The file size is listed so you can make a decision on docs related to transfer speed via your connection type.

You will need to double click the ones you want. It will be added to the "Selections" list on the upper right. After you add the selections simply click "Post Request" and an outbound message will appear in your Outbox. Next time you connect to the WinLink System your request will be sent. When you connect again after a few minutes you will download your request. The incoming messages will be marked as coming from "Service." Some of these incoming messages, like the satellite images, will come back as attachments.

Other options on this page are you can update the Catalog list via the internet (which is the best way as it's fast) or via RF via the "Request update via Radio" button.

You can get a good bit of neat stuff. Give it a go today.

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest & Upgrading Members

Join me in welcoming the latest additions to the Amateur Radio Service in our vibrant community.

KC3GTO Richard W. Fulton Jr

KD3CMP Thomas Rinaldi

KD3CNL Cyrus-Lincoln M. West

KD3CNZ Patricia K. Oswald

KD3CQR David J. Walter

KD3CQR Andrew Swartzentruber

KD3CQT Alexander Gordon

Tradition

Every storm, every activation, and every quiet night on the air reminds us why amateur radio matters. We are part of a tradition built on curiosity, service, and the simple belief that neighbors should be able to reach neighbors when it counts. As we look ahead, let's keep strengthening our skills, our stations, and our connections—because when the call goes out, it's the people behind the radios who make the difference.