

HAM Communications

BACKGROUND—Amateur radio, often called *ham radio*, is both a hobby and a community service in which participants use various types of radio communications equipment to communicate with other radio amateurs. Ham radio operators serve an important function in providing emergency backup communications for all levels of government.

IN WOODINVILLE—Locally, the Woodinville amateur radio operators could provide back up support communications for the Woodinville Emergency Operations Center or serve as an important link in the communications between the City of Woodinville and neighboring jurisdictions.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT—Amateur radio operators have been around on a regular basis since 1895, except for two distinct periods of time in the United States. During World War I and II the federal government ordered all amateur radio operators to cease operation and disband the equipment. However, the US government did something a little different during World War II.

It created the War emergency radio service which would remain active through 1945. After the War, the amateur radio service began operating once again with many of the amateur radio operators converting surplus military equipment into civilian use.



ABOVE—A photo of an amateur radio, often called “ham radio.”



ABOVE—A volunteer practicing using the amateur radio.

A MODERN ROLE—Today, amateur radio operators have a large age range and experience. There are 3 different levels of license offered through the FCC. The different levels are progressive and each higher level requires more experience.

FOR MORE INFORMATION—If you are interested in finding out more about amateur radio operators and/or supporting communications as an amateur radio operator, please contact **Northshore Emergency Management Coalition RACES** at (425) 354-1744 or NorthshoreEMC@gmail.com.