



For Immediate Release
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When the Power Grid Fails and Cell Towers Go Dark: Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club Calls on Residents to Get Licensed Before the Next Hurricane Hits

FORT MYERS, FL — August 26, 2026 — When a major hurricane strikes Southwest Florida, cell networks quickly overload, internet services collapse, and power grids fail. In those critical post-storm hours, one form of communication reliably holds the line: Amateur Radio.

The Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club, Inc. (FMARC) is urging local residents to build ultimate personal and community resilience by obtaining their FCC Amateur (Ham) Radio license. To ensure Lee County is prepared for the next disaster, FMARC hosts monthly, low-cost exam sessions designed to get new operators on the air quickly.

Why Lifesaving Emergency Communications Start with Ham Radio:

- **Unmatched Post-Hurricane Reliability:** When traditional infrastructure fails, ham radio operates entirely off-grid. Operators rely on battery, generator, and solar power to transmit crucial safety information.
- **Vital Public Service & Disaster Relief:** Licensed operators serve as critical lifelines, supporting local emergency management, search-and-rescue teams, and neighborhood welfare checks.
- **Hands-On Preparedness Exercises:** Events like annual "Field Day" drills challenge operators to set up off-grid stations under simulated emergency conditions, honing technical skills before real crisis strikes.
- **No Morse Code Required:** Modern FCC entry-level (Technician Class) exams focus on practical radio safety and electronics, making it accessible for all ages without archaic barriers.

“When cell towers blow down, amateur radio becomes the primary voice for emergency response and family safety,” said Carmine Vetrano, President of FMARC. “We modernised licensing to welcome a new generation of responders—you don't need a engineering degree or Morse code to save a life, just a willingness to learn.”

Upcoming License Exam Details

- When: Thursday, September 10, 2026, at 6:00 PM (Regularly scheduled for the first Thursday of every month).
- Where: Tice Fire Department, 9351 Workmen Way, Fort Myers, FL.
- Cost: Exam sessions are fully subsidized by FMARC and the Laurel VEC for Lee County candidates (applicants only pay standard FCC processing fees). FMARC reimburses all FCC fees for applicants under 18.

TAKE ACTION TODAY: BECOME YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD'S LIFELINE

Don't wait for the next storm tracking map to feature Southwest Florida. Reserve your exam slot now, equip your family with off-grid capability, and step up to serve your community.

Register for the next exam session today:

- Web: fmarc.net/license-education/ham-radio-licensing
- Email: fcc_exams@fmarc.net
- Phone: (941) 275-9145

Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club (FMARC): An ARRL-affiliated club since 1957, FMARC provides the education, licensing, and community support to turn a passion for technology into a lifelong hobby and a vital public service. For more information or to register for the next exam session visit <https://fmarc.net/license-education/ham-radio-licensing/> or by email at fcc_exams@fmarc.net or call (941) 275-9145.

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Field Day is just one of the exciting events of Amateur Radio. Operators set up as an exercise to test their skills and equipment as if in an emergency situation, using off-grid resources and making as many contacts as possible during the weekend.