

# **Shingletown Emergency Radio (SER)**

**February, 2019 - update**

**The Shasta County State of Emergency Declaration**

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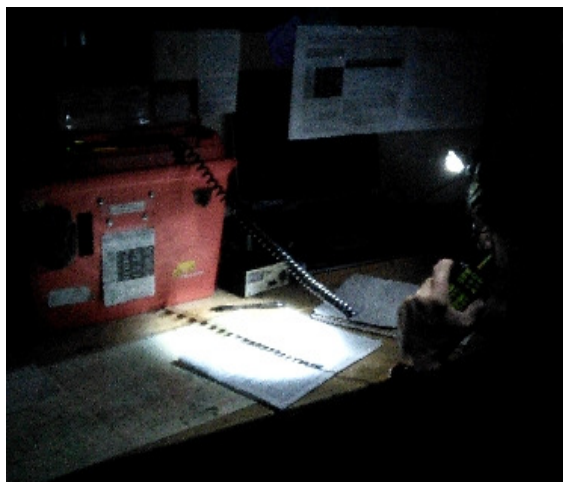


W6BEN – SITREP NET

## **HAM RADIO AND Emergency Communication Operations**

We are recovering from severe storm damage which resulted in the declaration of a State of Emergency for Shasta County. It was reported that 45,000 of PG &E's customers were without power in Shasta, Tehama, Butte, and Glenn Counties. Another 16,000 were without power in Redding. (See page 5 for reports of Radio Operators in action).

Strong winds and heavy snow storms hammered Shingletown. Power outages in Shingletown lasted from February 13, 2019 (Approx 3:00 A.M.) through February 17, 2019 (with Figaro Dr. in Shasta Forest Village having its electrical power restored at approximately 7:14 P.M.). That is the better part of 5 days. Some areas had power restored earlier, while others may have had power restored later. Other locations were still without power after such time.



## EMERGENCY NET OPERATIONS K6PDS – SITREP NET

During the State of Emergency, there was no commercial electrical power, leaving tens of thousands in the dark.

In Shingletown, telephone land lines, cell phones, and the internet were all dead. One couldn't "dial 911". Due to over-night snow depths ranging from 2 feet (Shasta Forest Village) to over 3 and 4 feet in other areas, many residents were snow bound. Some residents (including elderly and those with medical conditions) were without any source of heat as temperatures plunged into the mid and upper 20's.

Thank you to Ham Radio operators and others who stepped up and rendered RADIO assistance, including: W6BEN, KF6JAQ, KK6SWE, KK6SWG, KI6WAU, K6PDS, and others.

During our emergency radio nets, Ham Radio Operators reported in from Shingletown, Cottonwood, Palo Cedro and Bella Vista. These operators represent part of the group of "doers" and people of action. And we need more to step up to the plate. That includes – YOU! The "someday I will get involved" doesn't help someone who is without electricity, has a medical situation and has no heat (and the temperature in the house and outside are both at or below freezing). "Someday" might translate into you being the one in need of help. Why not help out? Why not start now?



How can you help? TURN ON YOUR RADIO, AND “SCAN THE PLAN” [146.760 (- PL 107.2), 146.640 (- PL 88.5), 147.165 (+ PL 88.5), AND 146.505 (SIMPLEX)].

If you are not licensed, you can study on line. Plus, there are Ham Operators willing to help you. The Shingletown Amateur Radio Club (STARC) conducts the testing locally and can help get you licensed.

The Shingletown Emergency Radio Plan (SER) is self activating, and uses volunteer licensed ham radio operators. Any participating station can Tone and Activate the net at any time (as operators are encouraged to be monitoring designated frequencies as near to 24/7 as possible). It is encouraged that if stations are going to “rag chew”, that they select a

frequency other than the “scan plan” frequencies.

During this state of emergency, situation report nets were conducted multiple times during the day and at night. Again, the plan includes Radio Operators 24/7 scanning of the designated radio frequencies for emergency radio traffic. When radio nets are called, they are very short in duration, brief and succinct in order to conserve limited battery power. Reports are obtained from different locations as to emergency needs, status of power outages, telephone communications, accidents, radio traffic, information updates, need for wood, heat, etc... . The purpose is to coordinate communications so that citizens can assist others and seek help. During forest fire season, similar procedures are followed.

During this February, 2019 State of Emergency, radio operators individually rendered assistance to others when there was no cell phone, no telephone land line, no internet, and no ability to “dial 911”.

**Having an up and running Radio Plan allowed them to communicate and be able to call for assistance.**

The purpose of the Shingletown Emergency Radio Plan is to provide an emergency communications platform during emergencies. It is not for the purpose of authorizing or directing field actions. That is up to individuals. The key point is that during this State of Emergency, Ham Radio Operators using a pre-set Radio Communications Emergency Plan had a “plug and play” plan to be able to coordinate activities and call for help if needed. Others, not using radio, had NO EFFECTIVE MEANS to coordinate, seek assistance, or ask that someone call 911 when **all other communication systems had in fact failed and were of no use.** Your cell phone, land line, internet, e-mail, social media, facebook, etc..., were all totally useless! So, what is your plan? Ham Radio Operations can be of assistance. So why not get involved?

**Some Activities initiated by individual(s) radio operators of their own choosing (during the State of Emergency) included:**

1. Radio operators monitoring the designated radio frequencies for emergency traffic and providing situation reports. This monitoring was 24/7 and involved the use of the specified frequencies and use of alerting tones. This vital monitoring function is critical to any emergency communications plan, as emergencies are spontaneous, and they don't happen pursuant to a plan. Without people actually monitoring the plan frequencies, no one will be there when a call for assistance is made. So if you can sit at home and monitor (as well as monitoring while mobile), you are in fact a vital asset for community preparedness! Just follow the plan.
2. Relaying radio traffic (due to mountainous terrain) from one radio frequency (SIMPLEX 146.505) to A REPEATER FREQUENCY in order to disseminate information to a larger geographic area. In this Storm two (2) Scan Plan repeaters were down and the 146.640 repeater was used with Simplex 146.505.
3. Relaying request for telephone contact to a radio operator in another area who had phone service. That radio operator in turn made telephone contact with the individual out of the area.
4. Using snow shoes to conduct welfare checks on elderly neighbors with medical conditions and providing some food items, kerosene heater and refilling the heater. The person was house bound and had no heat. The use of snow shoes and / or cleats were necessary due to snow and ice conditions.
5. When a radio operator who had been driving and conducting welfare checks on people in different areas of Shingletown didn't report into the net as scheduled, another radio operator drove to his home (at 9:00 P.M.

as snow was falling) to confirm he had returned home safely. During the mobile welfare check, communication by radio was the only means of making a distress call if needed.

6. Providing a portable generator to another radio operator which was used for charging and maintaining batteries for emergency communication nets, and recharging neighbors cell phones (so they could be used when cell service was eventually restored).

7. During the 1<sup>st</sup> day of storm, one operator conducted wellness checks on six (6) families in the geographic area ranging from Black Butte to Shingletown, and provided a heater to a family.

8. When telephone land line service was restored to a limited area, a radio operator with a functioning land line placed calls to family members of neighbors who were both in California and outside of California. The reports were that the Shingletown family members were okay, had food, water and heat. Those Shingletown neighbors didn't have land lines, and their cell phone and internet services were still not working at that time.

9. Providing on scene radio reports from Dollar General in Shingletown, advising that electrical power was now on at that location, and that the store was conducting business on cash only basis. Other stores in Shingletown were still not yet open.

10. Provided on scene radio report as to gasoline availability and supply in Palo Cedro.

11. Providing on scene radio reports of actual road conditions on highway 44 between Shingletown and Palo Cedro.

12. Monitoring the Next Door Neighbor website when generator was running and internet working. Such information would be relayed over the radio as appropriate for those without power and no internet.

13. Monitoring battery powered scanner for local information to relay information over the radio as appropriate.

14. Walking one half mile in the snow to a neighbor's house to start the generator for them.

15. Hiking through the snow to cut a tree limb in neighbor's road so she could go to a medical doctor appointment.

16. Maintaining battery power for radio having ability to reach Cal Fire by radio if there was a life threatening emergency and no ability to call 911 by any other means.

Many people in Shingletown helped their neighbors and showed true compassion and sense of community. These are people of action, not mere words.

The February 2019 State of Emergency conclusively shows that by combining positive action with an emergency radio communications plan, we can communicate with others, expand the coordination of resources, and seek help even when there is no cell phone, no land line, no internet, and no ability to otherwise "dial 911".

Winter is not yet over, and the Fire Season will be upon us shortly.

To be part of a proactive communications emergency plan of action, start now by turning on your radio and "SCAN THE PLAN".

Call 474-3267 if you would like to help out and want more information. It all starts with each individual stepping up to the plate and taking action. Join in and help out your community.

God Bless America  
K6PDS out. 73