



# District 3 SkyWarn Net Activation

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SkyWarn District 3 is sending this out to clarify a couple of misconceptions about SkyWarn District 3 and when our weather net is activated. With the severe weather season approaching, and a few nets are already under our belts, now seems like a good time to explain the program. First, SkyWarn is the amateur radio section.. This is a volunteer program officially organized and directed by the National Weather Service. By way of clarification, here are some things SkyWarn District 3 is not:

- For us HAMs, it's **NOT** an ARRL program.
- It is also **NOT** a program of any (EMA) Emergency Management Agency.
- It is **NOT** a storm chasing club.

Now, this doesn't mean you can't do more than one of the above, it's just not an official act under the auspices of SkyWarn. Skywarn's one and only task is to provide severe weather observations to the (NWS) NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE office with WARNING RESPONSIBILITY for the area they operate in.

Each SkyWarn section is administered by the (NWS) National Weather Service office. They are the ones that direct the activities of their program. If you want more information about how the local program works in your area, contact the SkyWarn Coordination Meteorologist at the NWS office that covers your area. The Cleveland, OH office covers Northern Ohio. This area is broken down into 6 sub-sections. Our SkyWarn is District 3 is the Cleveland section. This section covers the following counties: **CRAWFORD, KNOX, MARION, MORROW, RICHLAND.**

We **DO** get reports from some of the other counties, remote from in the District 3 County Warning Area. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, there probably aren't many ham's comparatively speaking. Also, radio coverage may not be adequate from Cleveland. Storm spotting is a great recruiting tool. SkyWarn District 3 has been accompanying the NWS meteorologists to many of the non-ham spotting courses, giving a short introduction to ham radio. At some of the sessions, there has been a lot of interest. If you know of anyone in our remote counties that may be interested, please try to talk them into getting their ham ticket. Once they're on the air they'll be hooked and realize how much more hams can do than storm spotting. This will benefit everyone.

## **And now for our (District 3) activation procedure:**

The SkyWarn net is activated on the 146.94 repeater whenever the NWS needs information from field spotters in our 5 counties (CRAWFORD, KNOX, MARION, MORROW, RICHLAND). Some areas distant from this repeater run local nets, that in turn forward information to us. Many people think we are only a District 3 net. Not true. We in-turn forward the information to the NWS in Cleveland, from any and all that can reach the 146.940 repeater.

Also, some people seem upset when we don't bring up a net immediately when we are under a weather watch. Although we have 3 people who are monitoring the weather conditions (almost 24/7/365 year long) when there is a threat. **WE** have to verify it first with a NWS Watch, or Warning, then and only then, will we place the repeater into the appropriate watch or warning. The purpose of this is simple. A watch means severe weather is possible. It may not even happen. We can't ask our people to sit around for hours for what might happen.

## STEPS OF ACTIVATIONS

### 1) GREEN LEVEL – ACTIVE STANDBY MODE

“The National Weather Service has indicated that there is a THREAT for SEVERE WEATHER within the listening area of this repeater.”

Please keep transmissions short with breaks to permit any severe weather reports to reach SKYWARN spotters. Spotters are requested to check their systems, and any backup systems at this time to make sure that you are ready for any SkyWarn®™ event.

### 2) YELLOW LEVEL – WATCH MODE

The National Weather Service has indicated a **SEVERE WEATHER THREAT CURRENTLY EXISTS** in the listening area of this repeater. SKYWARN is now in WATCH mode.

This WATCH mode is an informal net and all weather observation reports are welcome. Although this repeater remains open for general amateur use during the WATCH mode net, any weather observations should be called in to net control. It is requested that transmissions be kept short and breaks given (about 10 seconds) to permit observation reports to reach net control.

### 3) RED LEVEL – WARNING MODE

“The National Weather Service has indicated that **SEVERE WEATHER IS OCCURRING** within the listening area of this repeater. (Read the list of warnings) SKYWARN is currently activated as a directed net.”

**WARNING** mode is a DIRECTED NET, and all calls should be made to the Net Control Station ONLY. It is requested that all NON-SKYWARN®™ traffic be curtailed (aka STOPPED) during this SKYWARN®™ weather event, and that transmissions be kept short and 20 second breaks given to permit observation reports to reach net control.

Hope this clarifies the SkyWarn District 3 program, and our net activation procedure. If you have any questions on how this works, please contact [ohrvcamper@gmail.com](mailto:ohrvcamper@gmail.com)