

Spotlight – Ron Edwards K7RCZ

I had been interested in ham radio for years but did not think I could pass the Morse code portion of the exam. Living in California with all of the fires and earthquakes, the normal communication, such as landlines and cell phones, were always the first thing to go. I saw that ham radio would always work and it continued to pique my interest.

*In December 2004, we moved to Saratoga Springs, Utah, and I was called to be a Bishop for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We established a block captain system for emergencies and tried to help them understand more about emergency preparedness, but the words **emergency preparedness** seemed to fall on deaf ears. It had been preached for years by our church leaders, and it just was not happening. In 2009, I was called to be the Stake President in Saratoga Springs. My responsibilities for families and their safety grew from one ward to eight wards overnight. I kept asking myself how we were going to help our families become more prepared. One night it dawned on me that we needed to change the title to **family preparedness**, and that seemed to change the mindset of stake members, which prompted many of them to start getting their families prepared.*



Remembering my California experiences, I took the Technician exam in July 2011, and became a ham radio operator, KF7RCZ. The following month I passed the General exam and requested a vanity call sign, K7RCZ.



After researching the FCC database the licensed ham radio operators in Saratoga Springs, and found those living in my stake boundaries. I contacted two of the ones with the most experience, and asked them to be communication specialists. We established a stake net for each Sunday, and began recruiting ham radio operators to join our net. We also started teaching ham radio classes. Over the next two years, our stake net grew to a city-wide net, and we had approximately 35 operators checking in from multiple stakes and wards in the city each week.

This net was activated in a emergency situation in Saratoga Springs on two occasions. The first was the [Dump Fire](#), in which we assisted the fire department and the police in evacuating some 2500 residents. The second occurred two months later, when we experienced a "100-year" flood. Our ham radio operators and additional operators from the ham community helped manage some 10,000 volunteers with mucking out basements and helping build stone barricades to help mitigate any further flooding.

I truly believe in ham radio, and have seen it in action as we helped families in need! I continue to volunteer with many of the communication teams in the State of Utah, in Utah County, and here in Eagle Mountain. I've made more wonderful friendships from the ham radio community, and will be forever grateful for their associations!.

– 73, Ron K7RCZ

Ron is a member of UARC, UVARC, UCARES, and several EmComm groups. Thanks for all you do, Ron!