

Alexandria Radio Club Winter Field Day 2023



When is it?

Winter Field Day officially begins at 2:00 p.m. Eastern time on Saturday, January 28th, 2023. It runs for 24 hours, ending at 13:59 p.m. Eastern time on Sunday, January 29th, 2023

Location

Alexandria Fire Department Station 210. Station 210 is located at 5255 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, Virginia. We are grateful to the City of Alexandria Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Station personnel for helping to arrange use of operating space for WFD 2023. This exercise will not be open to the public as are ARRL Field Day events.

What is Winter Field Day?

Winter Field Day is a communications exercise held in the middle of winter environments during the last weekend in January. Ham radio operators worldwide participate in Winter Field Day. Winter Field Day (WFD) can be worked from the comfort of home; however, WFD was created with the idea that ham radio operators should practice portable emergency communications in winter environments because the potential for freezing temperatures, snow, ice, and other hazards present unique operational concerns. It is formatted to help increase levels of preparedness for disasters and to improve operational skills in subpar conditions. Amateur radio operators may use frequencies on the HF, VHF, or UHF bands and are free to use any mode that can faithfully transmit the required exchange. Similar to the ARRL's Field Day, bonus points are earned in several ways, including using non-commercial power sources, operating from remote locations, satellite contacts, and more. WFD is sponsored by the Winter Field Day Association and is recognized by the American Radio Relay League. See WFD rules at <https://winterfieldday.com/rules.php>.

Exercise Objectives

Our primary objective is to use WFD as a vehicle to demonstrate Alexandria Radio Club (ARC) readiness and capabilities to deploy communications capabilities during emergencies. Club members should use their own call signs to operate from home following WFD standard rules and requirements. Those at home submitting WFD logs as individuals may specify ARC as the club's name. Logs that bear ARC as the club's name will be aggregated for a total ARC club score. This will allow our club members to compete as individuals and also work toward contributing to a club score for ARC.

Club members deployed to Station 210 will use the Alexandria Radio Club call sign, W4HFH, for the WFD 2023 event when operating from that location. The deployment exercise will have the following objectives:

- Provide an opportunity for ARC members with HF go-boxes to show that they can deploy with their HF go-boxes in case of emergencies or disasters
- Provide a training opportunity for ARC members to learn “how-to’s” concerning building and using HF go-boxes. New hams can learn what should be included in a “go box” kit and other important considerations.
- Develop better understanding about how to deploy and use potential City facilities that may be needed during future emergency deployments.
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate the use Winlink for HF radio generated emails
- Provide an opportunity to develop more confidence in ARC ARES deployment capabilities

This deployment exercise is more about training and the logistics of doing portable operating rather than logging maximum QSOs. The focus is on the technical and logistical aspects of setting up portable functional HF stations despite winter conditions, and having our participants test their personal preparedness and gear under those conditions. Hopefully, our new hams will have their first experience operating HF, and a number of experienced hams will test out their go-kit stations over the course of the weekend. While it is unknown what prevailing weather conditions will exist during WFD, we are expecting typical weather for the mid-Atlantic region in January, whether there is freezing rain, high wind, or single-digit temperatures.

Operational Details for Winter Field Day 2023

Prior to deployment of ARC HF/VHF/UHF member go-kit stations to Alexandria Fire Station 210, an antenna installation team led by Joe Porcelli, KT3I, will coordinate with station personnel for work space, installation of wire antennas for 40 and 20 meters; and VHF/UHF antennas. Generator power requirements and configurations will be determined at that time.

Hours of on-air-operation will be broken down into three-hour time slots:

- 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 28th.
- 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 28th.
- 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 29th
- 1100 a.m. to 1:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 29th

Club personnel with their go-kits and other participants will report to Station 210 one hour before their assigned 3-hour period of operating. This will allow sufficient time for configuring radio equipment to work with available antennas and power prior to commencing operations. Parking instructions will be provided separately.

Club stations deployed to Station 210 will be operating during WFD as category “1” (Indoors), Entry Class “2” (stations operating simultaneously). An Extra Class club licensee will be present at Station 210 during all on-air operations.

Prior to Field Day Checklist

- Purchase/Acquire/Configure/Test N3FJP Logging Software
- Configure CAT interface for automatic band/mode logging
- If using N3FJP, configure Web Upload Contest Status

- Create a Discord account
- Click the special link to gain access to the WA6MPR server
- Explore WA6MPR Chat Room
- Read the Winter Field Day rules at www.WinterFieldDay.com
- Determine the location where you will operate from
- Decide on your Category (Home, Indoor, Outdoors, Mobile) if operating on an individual basis.
- Decide your "Class" for the event (number of simultaneous transmitters)
- Decide how/where to install your antenna(s)
- Check your antenna(s)
- Get your station ready (including power source)
- Brush up on your Field Day operating techniques per mode

During Winter Field Day Weekend

- Check/update your computer's clock for the correct date/time
- Confirm your logging software is working correctly
- If operating individually use your own call sign (not W4HFH)
- Chat with other club members online using the WA6MPR Discord chat room app

After Field Day

- Export your log in Cabrillo format
- Edit the log with a text editor to add the line "Club: ARC" (no quotes) after the "CALLSIGN: XXXX" line
- If operating from home, email your log to wfda@winterfieldday.com as specified in the official rules