

The close working relationship between the NWS and the amateur radio community provides many special benefits to each group. These benefits are highlighted in the following goals for the Mid-South SKYWARN Emergency Network:

1. To provide the NWS with timely and accurate severe weather reports via amateur radio. This includes both incoming reports of severe weather per the NWS criteria and amateur radio operators making observations at specific locations in response to a NWS request.
2. To create and maintain an organized communication network for passing critical severe weather traffic in a timely fashion to and from the NWS in the event that normal communications are interrupted. The NWS has lost normal communications in the past and it is likely that the SKYWARN Amateur Radio Net would be activated in future communications emergencies.
3. To disseminate warnings, statements and other products issued by the NWS to the amateur radio community. Every attempt is made to disseminate all statements and warnings issued by the NWS over the SKYWARN Net to keep amateurs informed of developing situations and to practice for situations when normal communications channels fail.
4. To organize and train amateur radio operators to prepare themselves and their families for disaster or emergency weather-related situations so that they may be available to assist in emergency net operations. This preparedness training is critical if the SKYWARN system is to be expected to operate reliably during true emergency situations.
5. To maintain a spotter network that is transparent to jurisdictional and political boundaries and operates uniformly across the entire warning area. The net is independent, and is not directly affiliated with any club, group or organization.

#### **1.4 Organizational Structure of SKYWARN**

SKYWARN is NOT a club, but rather a public service organization dedicated to service to the National Weather Service and other local agencies during periods of severe weather. SKYWARN is open to all amateur radio operators, and is an independent group, not directly affiliated with ARES, RACES or any other club, group or organization.

SKYWARN consists of several key elements. The first of these elements is the NWS SKYWARN Program Manager and Focal Point(s). These individuals are National Weather Service employees who are responsible for overseeing the operation of the network, for selecting and appointing key SKYWARN personnel, and for acting as contact points for the NWS among the amateur radio community. The Warning Coordination Meteorologist serves as the Program Manager, and may appoint SKYWARN Focal Point(s) to perform day-to-day functions associated with the SKYWARN network.