

Welcome to JBWA SKYWARN Net Controllers!

As SKYWARN Net Controllers you can call the net into session when you are aware of threatening weather or other emergencies. In general, we do not call the net into session until we have a tornado or severe thunderstorm warning for one of our counties. Our counties are Lowndes and Butler. We close the net when the warning expires or has ended.

The scripts (for emergency activation and for the training net) are suggestions and not set in stone. Adapt them to your own style. For instance, when we have an emergency activation, it is OK to just keep saying “Standing by for weather traffic” rather than going down the list of emergency, then urgent, etc etc. And then when nothing seems to be happening, I will ask for additional check-ins.

The first and foremost purpose of the net is to keep the frequency clear for weather reports. Therefore it is a good thing if the repeater is quiet for a while. Just jump in there once in a while to say “Jim Bell SKYWARN ... standing by for weather related traffic.” We do not want to fill the time with chatter.

The second purpose is to get information from SKYWARN spotters and to see if reports need to be forwarded to the National Weather Service. Therefore we ask for reports from the affected area near severe cells and give them priority. We also ask for check-ins from affected areas first, like “any stations Butler County, check in now.”

The third purpose is to provide brief (emphasis is on brief) radar updates, like “the cell near Hayneville seems to be strengthening” or “the cell west of Georgiana has changed direction and is now moving towards Greenville.”

Given the mission of SKYWARN, there are some things that we do not do. We do not read lengthy National Weather Service warnings with all the details because that takes too much time and because people can get the details themselves on their computers or smart phones. Simply give a location and movement with speed for severe cells, like “a severe thunderstorm is northwest of Greenville moving east at about 20 mph.”

In general, we want to welcome participation and guide people in a positive manner towards disciplined net activity.

Thank you for volunteering. Check on the schedule when you are running the training net and let me know when and if you have a conflict and need someone else to cover for you.