

County of San Luis Obispo

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DAVID EDGE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

NEWS RELEASE

FROM THE COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *Note: This is release is intended to counter a rumor*

HAM RADIO OPERATORS REMAIN ACTIVE AND APPRECIATED

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, April 9, 2009 – The County was notified by the Federal Communications Commission Wednesday, April 8 of a rumor on an Internet group site stating that the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance on March 31 which would ban amateur radio operators – commonly known as ham radio operators – from operating their transmitting stations. The rumor is posted as an alleged news story from a non-existent Los Angeles news publisher. The story alleges that the purpose of this false action by the Board was due to supposed interference caused by ham radio transmitters, among other reasons. The article has an online posting date of April 1, 2009.

The FCC has reported they have had a few calls inquiring about the posting, which is on a Google Groups page.

Not only is this online fabricated story not true, but SLO County government, incorporated cities within the county, and other entities work hand-in-hand with amateur radio operators who provide alternate and back-up communications in case of unique emergencies or disasters. In fact, the County signs ham radio operators up as Disaster Service Workers to assist in times of need. Their assistance is absolutely appreciated and the radio operators who work with the County – primarily through a ham group called the San Luis Obispo County Emergency Communications Council – are each valued and considered an integral part of countywide emergency response organizations. Their emergency support efforts are coordinated through the County's Information Technology Department.

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The ham radio operators have radio communications set up, or wired to be set up quickly, in city Emergency Operations Centers (EOC), the County EOC, and other emergency and disaster coordination sites throughout the area.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The reason we are sending this news release is due to the fact that the FCC has reported they have received inquiries, and the ham radio operators who assist local agencies with drills, exercises and in actual times of emergency are indeed important and valued. The formal title of the ham group – actually, plural since in our county two entities operate as one: Amateur Radio Emergency Services and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (ARES/RACES). As noted in the article, they in turn coordinate through their San Luis Obispo County Emergency Communications Council. The SLO ECC Web site is www.sloecc.org

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