



# Press Release

## **WE9COM Repeater Comes Online in Northeast Wisconsin**

WeComm Ltd. second repeater is up and running

- **May 10, 2008, Suring, WI**

WeComm, Ltd. is pleased to announce the startup of the second repeater in the WeComm network. This repeater is located near the Village of Suring (Oconto County) with solid base station coverage from Fond du Lac to Stevens Point to Irma to Crandon to Stevenson, MI to Kewaunee and everything in between! WeComm designed this repeater for reliable communications using new, commercial quality equipment (a new M-A/COM Mastr III repeater with a new TX/RX duplexer). The antenna is mounted at 700 feet on the WRVM FM 102.7 tower giving this repeater its incredible coverage. Suring is located half way between the North Pole and the equator, and while the repeater coverage is not quite that large, it does cover much of Northeast Wisconsin with clear, crisp audio. It will be ideal for emergency communications, weather spotting, public service communications and general amateur radio use.

William Becks, WeComm's Technical Director said, "Considering the very rugged terrain of the counties surrounding the Suring area, the coverage is rather fantastic." Becks continued, "From an engineering perspective, our greatest challenge was to avoid the severe pattern distortion that occurs when relegated to side mounting of antennas on large metallic structures such as the massive WRVM tower. To overcome this problem and achieve the greatest possible coverage, we utilized what is known as "Methods of Moments" or NEC

computer modeling to determine the correct antenna and geometric placement that included a requirement for custom fabricated mounting hardware.”

Was it worth all the effort? “You bet it was”, says Becks, “Just ask any of the beta testers what they think about WeComm’s first high profile VHF Repeater installation, WE9COM at Suring, Wisconsin!”

WeComm, Ltd., incorporated in 2005, has begun designing and building a statewide network of Amateur Radio repeaters. Repeaters receive transmissions from stations on one frequency and retransmit them on another. The purpose is to increase the range of low powered stations allowing them to have much longer range. In 2007, WeComm was awarded tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service.

A major feature of the WeComm network of repeaters is the ability to link individual repeaters into a statewide configuration, or to un-link them to serve smaller areas and meet existing needs. Linking technology will be selected this summer and implemented in the fall of 2008. Wisconsin ARES/RACES is the intended user for the network for disaster, emergency and public service communications. When not needed by ARES/RACES the network will be open and available for normal Amateur Radio use.

Wisconsin ARES is sanctioned by the American Radio Relay League, a national advocacy group supporting amateur radio and promoting professionalism in Amateur Radio operations. Wisconsin RACES is sanctioned by Wisconsin Emergency Management under the oversight of the Federal Emergency Management Administration. ARES/RACES stands for Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service. In some states ARES and RACES are separate organizations. In Wisconsin they operate as a joined association.

Wisconsin ARES/RACES has response teams in nearly all of our state’s counties, which are active when needed. Most recently they responded to the bizarre January tornado in Kenosha County providing communications to emergency management and the Red Cross.

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ARES/RACES teams are frequently requested to assist with storm damage caused by tornado activity, as well as participating in weather spotting and reporting local conditions to the National Weather Service. Frequently, storm warnings are issued based on a combination of radar images and on the ground reports by trained ARES/RACES members.

ARES/RACES groups also frequently provide free communications support for parades, marathons, bike rides, and many other civic functions. This has the dual function of public service and allows the teams to train for emergency response under conditions similar to emergencies. All WeComm, Ltd. and ARES/RACES personnel are volunteers giving their time and resources to help their communities, state and the nation.

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**For immediate release**