

Saline County HAM Radio operators to broadcast for 2 days straight, June 27-28

JUNE 22, 2026 BY [SHELLI POOLE](#)



Local ham radio operators from the [Benton Amateur Radio Society \(BARS\)](#) will launch temporary communication stations this weekend for the annual ARRL Field Day, a 24-hour nationwide emergency exercise simulating disaster response infrastructure.

The event runs from **10 a.m. Saturday, June 27, through 1 p.m. Sunday, June 28 at Mills Park in Bryant.** They will be testing operators' ability to establish independent wireless networks under adverse conditions.

Organized annually since 1933 by ARRL, the [National Association for Amateur Radio](#) in the United States, this event showcases amateur radio's capacity to function independently of cell towers, internet infrastructure, and landline telephone networks. Participants across North America typically set up portable equipment in public spaces, backyards, and emergency centers to demonstrate community service and technical readiness.

Saline County operators plan to utilize alternative energy systems, including solar panels, batteries, and generators, to power their equipment. This year's simulation takes on heightened relevance following seasonal forecasts that predict an unusually active hurricane period.

“Hams have a long history of serving our communities when storms or other disasters damage critical communication infrastructure, including cell towers,” said Peg Porterfield, K5BKT, a local operator representing the society. “Ham radio functions completely independently of the internet and phone systems and a station can be set up almost anywhere in minutes.”

Porterfield noted that operators can quickly deploy a wire antenna into a tree or onto a mast, connect it to a radio and power source, and successfully establish communication across local and international borders.

- **WHAT** – Ham Radio Field Day
- **WHEN** – Jun 27 10AM – Jun 28 1PM
- **WHERE** – Mills Park in Bryant
- **WHO** – All are welcome

The event draws substantial participation each year, with more than 26,000 operators participating across North America in recent iterations. The ARRL reports there are currently more than 750,000 licensed amateur radio operators in the United States and an estimated 3 million globally.

The Amateur Radio Service operates under federal mandates to develop radio technology skills, practice emergency communication protocols, and foster international goodwill. Licensed participants range in age from 9 to over 100.

Residents interested in learning more about the hobby or reviewing licensing resources can access self-study materials through the ARRL website or contact local coordinator Peg Porterfield for information regarding the Saline County exercise.