# YCARES Winlink Net Local Weather Report Template Instructions

- Open **Winlink Express**: Launch the Winlink Express application on your computer.
- Start **a New Message**: Click on the "New Message" button (usually represented by a white paper icon).
- Select **Template**: In the new message window, click on "Select Template".
- Choose **Standard Templates**: Double-click on "Standard Templates" from the list.
- Select **Weather Forms**: Scroll down and double-click on "Weather Forms".
- Open **Local Weather Report**: Double-click on "Local Weather Report" to open the form.
- **Fill in the Form**: Click on Setup to set the agency to **YCARES Winlink Net,** Select the **THIS IS AN EXERCISE** option and enter the required information in the form fields.

## Current Local Weather Conditions Fields

1. **Call Sign**: Your amateur radio call sign.
2. **Observer Name**: Your name.
3. **Report Date/Time**: The date/time the report is being made.
4. **Location**: The location of the weather observation.
5. **City:** The city of the observation location.
6. **State:** The state of the observation location.
7. **County**: The county of the observation location.
8. **Latitude:** The Latitude of the observation location.
9. **Longitude:** The Longitude of the observation location.
10. **MGRS:** Let it be calculated from the entered Latitude and Longitude entries.
11. **Grid:** Let it be calculated from the entered Latitude and Longitude entries.
12. **Default units**: United States location use Imperial, otherwise Metric.
13. **Sky Cover:** Describe the extent of cloud cover (e.g., clear, partly cloudy, overcast).
14. **Current Conditions:** Click boxes that represent the observed conditions.
    a. If reporting on third party observed conditions with no provided intensity, leave as unknown.
15. **Temperature:** Enter the current air temperature in degree units for your location.
16. **Humidity:** Record the relative humidity percentage.
17. **Dewpoint:** Record the dewpoint temperature, which is the temperature at which air becomes saturated with moisture.
18. **Barometric Pressure:** Enter the barometric pressure for the units for your location.
19. **Three-hour trend:** Indicate whether the barometric pressure has been rising, falling, or steady over the past three hours.
20. **Wind Speed:** Measure or estimate wind speed from observed conditions and enter the wind speed in the units for your location.
21. **Direction From:** The direction from which the wind is blowing (e.g., N, NE, E, SE, etc.).
22. **Wind Gusts:** The current instantaneous highest wind gust speed observed.
23. **Wind Gusts max:** The instantaneous highest wind gust speed observed for the reporting period.

24. **Rain 1 HR**: The amount of rain that has fallen in the past hour.
25. **Rain Total:** The amount of rain that has fallen for the reporting period.
26. **Snow 1 HR:** The increase depth of snow that has fallen in the past hour.
27. **Snow Total:** The increase depth of snow that has fallen for the reporting period.
28. **NWS level:** Indicate all the National Weather Service levels of the weather event (e.g., advisory, watch, warning).
29. **Notes:** For the YCARES Winlink Net, Provide your One-Line Check-In sentence.

## Submitting the Form

- Save **Data**: (optional) Use the "Save Local WX Data" button to save the data for future use.
- Submit **the Message**: Once all information is filled out, click "Submit" to send the message.

## Observing Weather Without a Local Weather Station

If you don't have access to a local weather station, you can still gather useful weather data using alternative methods:

1. **Personal Weather Instruments**: Use handheld weather instruments like thermometers, barometers, hygrometers, and anemometers to measure temperature, pressure, humidity, and wind speed.
2. **Virtual Weather Stations**: Utilize virtual weather stations that estimate meteorological data based on nearby weather stations. These tools use interpolation methods to provide estimates for your location1.
3. **Online Weather Services**: Access online weather services like the National Weather Service (NWS) or other credible weather reporting services to gather data for your area.
4. **Weather Apps**: Use weather apps on your smartphone that provide real-time weather data and forecasts.
5. **Community Observations**: Collaborate with other amateur radio operators or community members to share weather observations and data.

By combining these methods, you can still provide accurate and valuable weather reports even without a dedicated local weather station.

## Beaufort Scale for Wind Speed Estimates

The Beaufort Scale is a widely used method that relates wind speed to observed conditions at sea and on land. It categorizes wind speeds into a scale from 0 (calm) to 12 (hurricane). Here are a few examples:

- **Beaufort 0 (Calm, <1 mph)**: Smoke rises vertically.
- **Beaufort 2 (Light Breeze, 4-7 mph)**: Wind felt on face; leaves rustle.
- **Beaufort 4 (Moderate Breeze, 13-18 mph)**: Dust and loose paper raised; small branches move.
- **Beaufort 6 (Strong Breeze, 25-31 mph)**: Large branches in motion; use of umbrellas becomes difficult.
- **Beaufort 9 (Strong Gale, 47-54 mph)**: Branches break off trees; minor structural damage occurs.

**2. Visual Indicators**

Observing the effects of wind on objects around you can provide an estimate of wind speed:

- **Leaves and Grass**: Slight movement indicates light breeze, while swaying trees suggest a moderate to strong breeze.
- **Flag Movements**: A flag fluttering lightly suggests a gentle breeze, while a fully extended flag indicates strong winds.
- **Water Surface**: Small ripples indicate light wind, while large waves and whitecaps suggest stronger winds.