

## ETO Customized Information Form Exercise

### Exercise Message Submission Window

- **MAY 16 00:00 UTC - May 22 08:00 UTC**

**Difficulty Level:** **Basic**

**Purpose:** Communities rely on 911 during emergencies. In July 2025 Pennsylvania experienced an intermittent statewide outage due to a system defect which caused 911 call failures and missing location data. In September 2025 parts of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi experienced 911 outages due to the accidental cutting of multiple optical fiber lines. In both of these incidents the community was advised to use the alternate non-emergency numbers. In this electronic age physical phone books no longer exist. As EmComm operators we are trained to prepare for incidents. For this exercise, a Customizable Information Form will be loaded and completed with your local backup numbers for your local Police/Sheriff, Fire Department, and Ambulance Service.

### Objectives:

- Research to find your local Police/Sheriff, Fire Department, and Ambulance Service alternative or non-emergency numbers.
- Use Winlink Express to download, load and finish populating a Customized Information Form with the information.
- Send the completed Customized Information Form to your ETO address and ETO-BK.

## Resources:

- General Notes on Frequently Seen Mistakes:  
[https://emcomm-training.org/Winlink\\_Thursdays.html](https://emcomm-training.org/Winlink_Thursdays.html)
- Finding your ETO Clearinghouse: <https://emcomm-training.org/General-Drill-Info.html>
- ETO Location Instructions — With or Without a GPS Receiver for your Computer [PDF]
  - <https://emcomm-training.org/Santa-2023/ETO-Location-Notes.pdf>
- How a GIS map-capable form's default position is determined:
  - From within Winlink Express Click on Help ⇒ Help Contents..., expand Operation, click on GIS Mapping Forms & Catalog Items

## Special Configurations:

- Recent configurations of Winlink Express have provided options on whether transmission of the Form Data XML file(s) for the current form are transmitted with each document. If not transmitted, the HTML form will not display. The ETO Feedback process uses this form data XML to parse the data in the exercise, so it should be provided. Ensure that the Form Data settings are as configured for ETO Exercises submissions.
- This dialog can be found under

The screenshot shows a configuration dialog for Winlink Express. It is divided into several sections:

- Form Server:** Contains two input fields: "IP address of form server:" with the value "localhost" and "IP port of form server:" with the value "8001".
- Sending Messages with Form Data:** Contains two checked checkboxes: "Attach XML files with form data to messages generated by forms" and "Attach XML form files to messages going to Internet e-mail addresses". These two checkboxes are highlighted with a red square.
- Automatic Form Opening:** Contains two checked checkboxes: "Automatically open forms when messages are selected" and "Automatically open reply forms when replying to messages with forms".
- Force Winlink Express to be shown over web browser after form submission:** A checked checkbox.
- Show on map only most recent report within 100 meters from same sender:** A checked checkbox.
- Send Forms as pdf Files:** Contains a paragraph of text explaining the option and a checkbox labeled "Send forms as pdf files to Internet addresses", which is currently unchecked.

At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: "Save" and "Cancel".

**Continue To the Next Page for Instructions**

## **Exercise Instructions – Concise:**

**Part 1: Research: Find the Name/Station # and the alternative or non-emergency phone numbers for the following served agencies in your local area.**

- A. Police/Sheriff
- B. Fire Department
- C. Ambulance Service

**Part 2: Download the text file** ETO\_Training\_Exercise\_2026-05-21.txt

**Part 3: Restart Winlink Express.** Update if needed.

**Part 4: Create a Winlink message using the Customizable form located in Standard Forms -> General Forms -> Customizable Forms.**

**Setup button:** EmComm Training Organization

**Load Information Form data using the downloaded file from Part 2.**

**Auto populate Date/Time**

**Fill in the form with the information from Part 1.**

**Comment:** Exercise, Exercise.

**Attach CVS data file to message:** No

**Part 5: Send to your ETO Clearinghouse and ETO-BK.**

**Continue To the Next Page for Detailed Instructions**

## Exercise Instructions - Detailed:

### Part 1: Research

1. Find the Station number/Name and alternative/non-emergency phone number for your local Police/Sheriff.
2. Find the Station number/Name and alternative/non-emergency phone number for the Fire Station closest to your home location.
3. Find the Name and alternative/non-emergency phone number for your local Ambulance Service.

### Part 2: Download File

1. Go to the EmComm Training Organization page for this exercise.
2. Download the file "ETO\_Training\_Exercise\_2026-05-21.txt." from the EmComm Training Organization web page ([https://emcomm-training.org/Winlink\\_Thursdays.html](https://emcomm-training.org/Winlink_Thursdays.html)).



**Important: Download this file; you will need it to complete the exercise:**

**[Text File: "ETO\\_Training\\_Exercise\\_2026-05-21.txt"](#)**

3. Make note where you save the file.

### **Part 3: Prep**

1. Open or restart the Winlink Express application.
2. Allow any updates to occur if prompted to do so.
3. Remove any Automatic Message Forwarding and/or Message Notification set within the Message Notification and Forwarding Window via Settings -> Message Notification and Forwarding.
4. Turn off CMS forwarding via Settings -> CMS Forwarding and User Options.
5. Having these options enabled may cause issues with ETO exercises, so please disable them while performing the exercises. If you need them enabled, you may reactivate them afterward.

#### Part 4: Create a New Message using the Customizable Form

1. Click on Message → New Message or click on the New Message icon on the Winlink Express menu toolbar.
2. Select Winlink Customizable form Message template.
  - Click on Select Template from the menu toolbar of your New Message window.
  - Click once on plus by Standard Forms or double click on Standard Forms to expand.
  - Click once on the plus by General Forms or double click on General Forms to expand.
  - Click once on Customizable Form.txt and click on Select button on the Template Manager toolbar or double click on Customizable Form.txt to select.
3. Click on the **Setup** button and enter “EmComm Training Organization”.
4. Click on the **Load Information Form data** button. (Recommend reading the pop-up: ‘Form Info’).
5. Find the file **ETO\_Training\_Exercise\_2026-05-21.txt**.
6. Select the file and open.
7. Click in the window next to **Form Creation Date/Time** to auto populate date and time (must be within the exercise time frame).
8. Using the information found in Part 1 fill in Column 2 and Column 3 of lines 1,2, and 3. Use dashes in the phone numbers in Column 3 for example 555-555-5555.
9. *Sender’s Comments or Additional Information* Box should be populated with “Exercise, Exercise.”
10. *Attach CSV data file to message?* No
11. Click on the **Save Form data** button. Click the **OK** button.
12. Click on the **Submit** button. Click the **OK** button.

#### Part 5: Send to your ETO and ETO-BK

1. Verify your ETO Clearinghouse address and ETO-BK are in the *To:* field.
2. Optionally, enter your internet email address in the *CC:* line.
3. Click on the **Post to Outbox** button on the New Message toolbar menu.
4. Select your session type from the drop-down list to the right of the **Open Session** button on the Winlink toolbar menu.
5. Click on the Open Session button.
6. Click *Start* to send your message.

ETO Winlink Thursday Exercise for May 16, 2026

End of Exercise Instructions

Example of completed customizable form

# ETO Winlink Thursday Exercise for May 16, 2026

**INFORMATION FORM**  
 EmComm Training Organization

**Setup** [Click to add your agency or group](#)

Event or Use Name <input type="text" value="Customizable Information Form Exercise"/>	Form Creation Date/Time <input type="text" value="2026-5-21 19:46"/>
Description or Form Information <input type="text" value="Alternative/Non-emergency Phone Numbers"/>	<input type="button" value="Load Information Form data"/> <a href="#">Form Info</a>

*Create whatever Column Name you want for each category*

#	Agency	Name/Station #	Alternative/Non-Emergency Number
1	Police/Sheriff	Harrison County Sheriff	228-896-3000
2	Fire Department	Fire Station 3	228-539-4414
3	Ambulance Service	Acadian Ambulance Service	1-800-259-3333
4			

Sender's Comments or Additional Information

Exercise, Exercise.

Attach CSV data file to message?  Yes  No

Ver 8.6.6

Enter a new message
— □ ×

Post to Outbox
Select Template
Attachments
Spell Check
Save in Drafts
Close

From: 
 Send as: 
 Request message receipt

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Attach:

## Beyond the Exercise

The following is not part of the exercise but are suggestions for you and your EmComm group:

- ▶ With the permission of your local Emergency Management Team, create a flyer or magnet with important alternate telephone numbers and local radio station frequencies for the community.
- ▶ Leave these flyers or magnets at public places, with their permission, such as library, courthouse, hospitals, drug stores, grocery stores, etc