

Social Media Messaging During Severe Weather

Cort Scholten

NWS Grand Rapids, MI

#GLOMW – August 25-27, 2015



@NWSGrandRapid



Traditional Messaging Steps

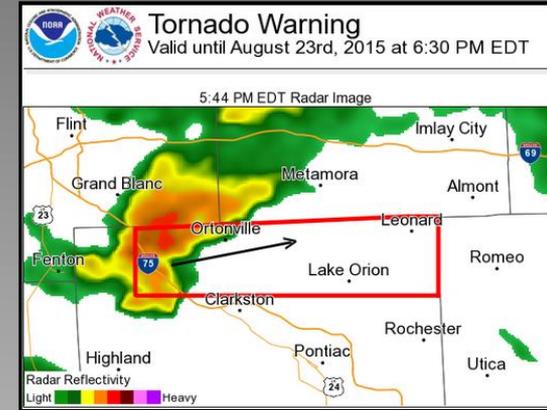
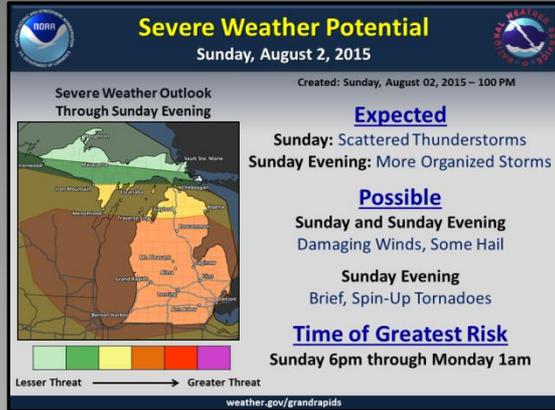
Outlook
Days to Hours



Watch
Hours



Warning
Minutes

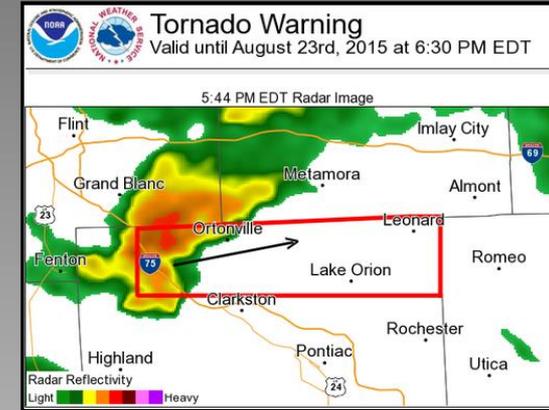
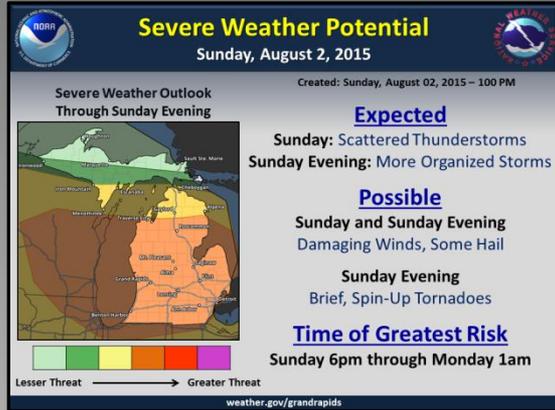


Add A Step

Outlook
Days to Hours

→ **Watch**
Hours

→ **Warning**
Minutes



↑
“Radar Update”?
~ Hour

Example from NWS Chicago

Storms Increasing in Coverage; Some Severe

Posted
6:13 pm

TOR

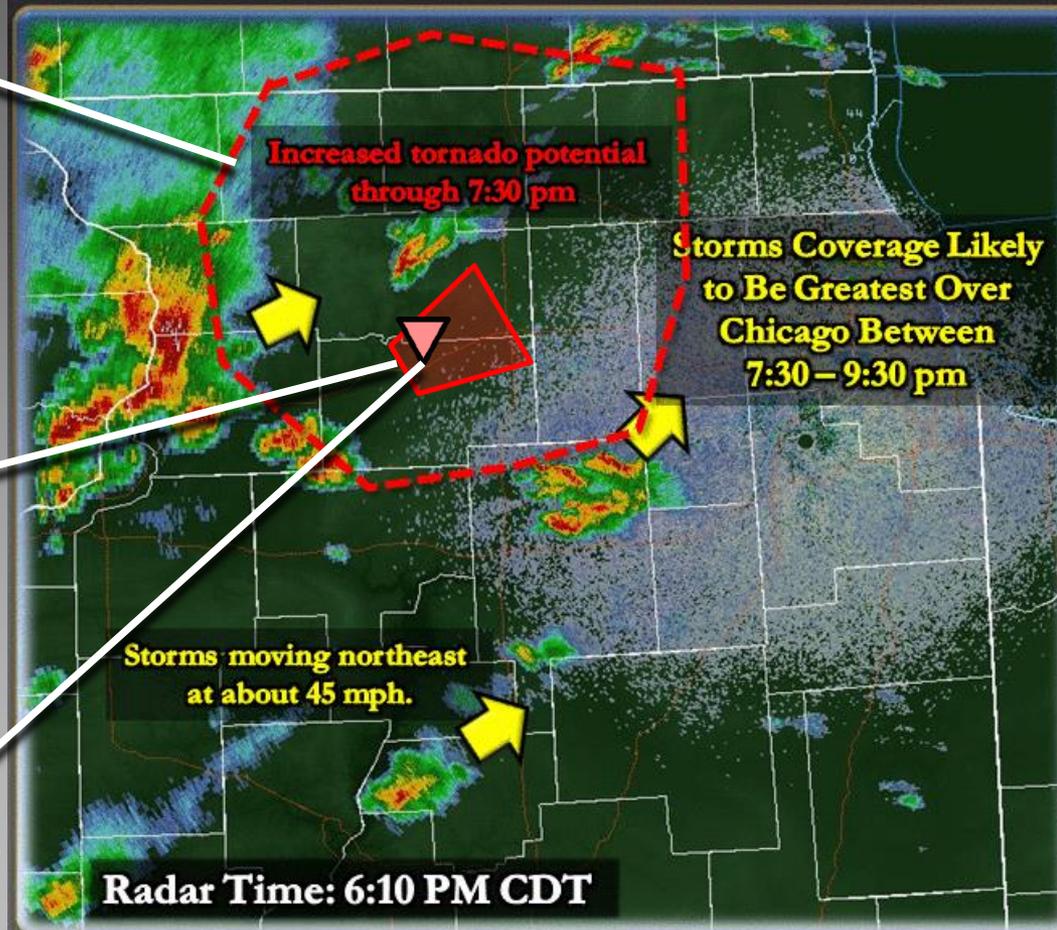
Warning

6:35 pm

Tornado

6:39 pm

Franklin Grove –
Rochelle –
Fairfield
EF-4



Hazards from Severe Storms

- Large hail & strong winds
- Tornado potential

Stay informed on the weather and have a means to hear a warning if one is issued

FORECAST:

weather.gov/chicago

REPORT SEVERE

Twitter: @NWSChicago
using: #ilwx #inwx or



NWS Chicago

Issued: 4/9/2015 6:11 PM

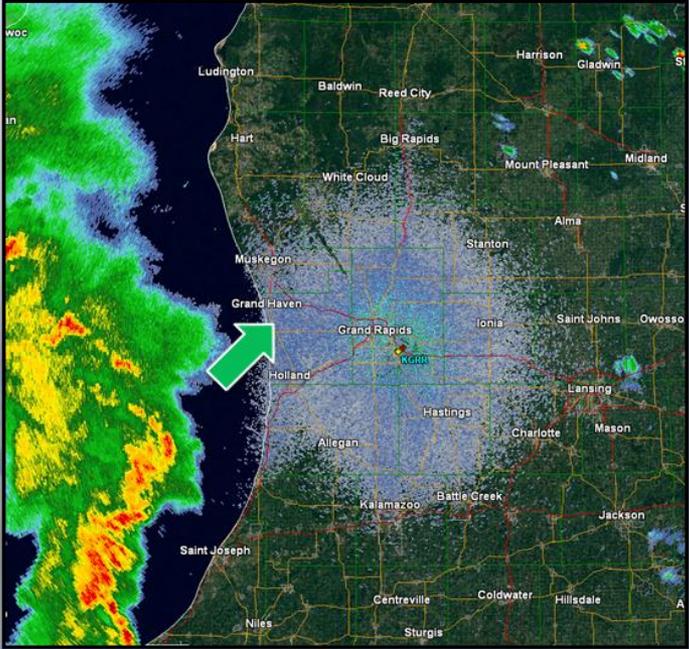


Use At NWS Grand Rapids

Showers/Storms Over Lake Michigan
10:52 PM, Tuesday, August 18, 2015



- Showers/storms moving northeast over Lake Michigan
- *Expected:*
Moderate to Heavy Rain
Lightning
Gusty Winds to 40 MPH
- Storms should gradually weaken over the next 2-3 hours
- Severe weather is unlikely



 www.weather.gov/grr  US National Weather Service Grand Rapids Michigan  @NWSGrandRapids

Green, Yellow, Orange, Red – Recurring Theme!

Subjective – Based on Impact Threat

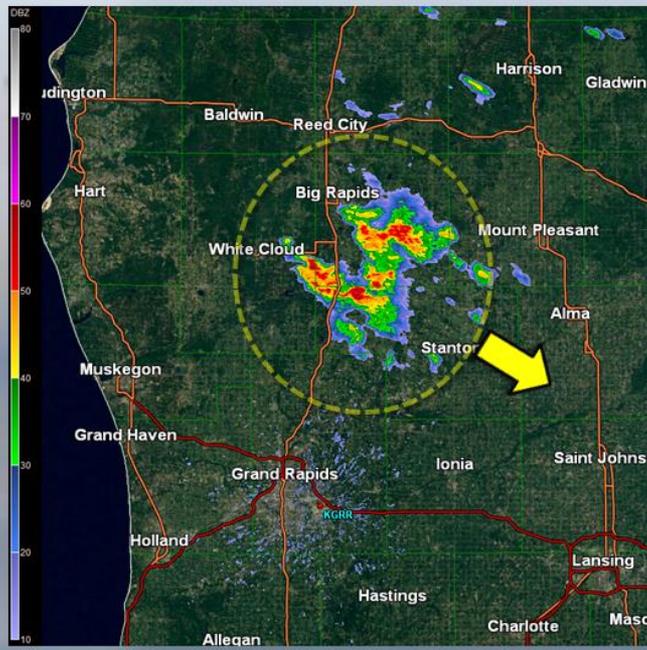
Subliminal – Message Should Match Color

Use At NWS Grand Rapids

Scattered Afternoon Thunderstorms
3:30 PM, Friday, August 14, 2015

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
NOAA
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

- Thunderstorms developing this afternoon/evening
- *Expected:* Heavy rain, frequent lightning, small hail and gusty winds
- *Possible:* Isolated severe weather with wind gusts around 60 mph and hail around 1 inch
- When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!



www.weather.gov/grr  US National Weather Service Grand Rapids Michigan  @NWSGrandRapids

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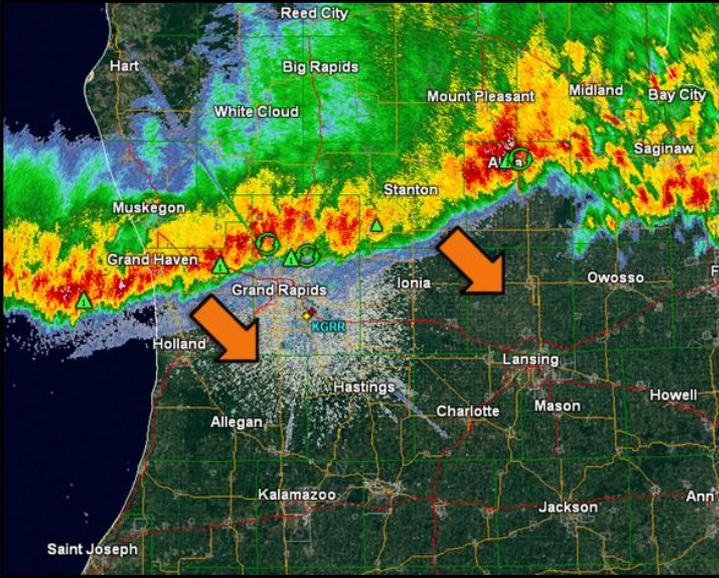
Use At NWS Grand Rapids

Strong to Severe Storms Ongoing
8:54 PM, Sunday, August 2, 2015

Expected:
Dangerous Lightning
Minor Wind Damage
Heavy Rain/Small Hail

Possible:
Brief Spin-up Tornado
Power Outages
Localized Minor Flooding
Quarter-Size Hail

• Have a plan to seek shelter from severe storms this evening



www.weather.gov/grr

US National Weather Service
Grand Rapids Michigan

@NWSGrandRapids

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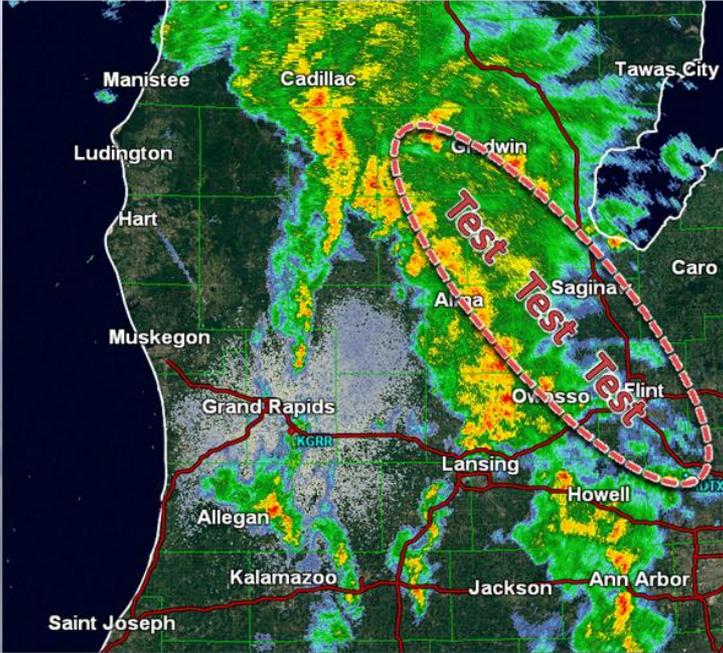
Subliminal – Message Should Match Color

Use At NWS Grand Rapids

Destructive Tornadoes Possible
HH:MM AM/PM, Day, Month Date, 2015



- Test – Severe Storms This Afternoon – Test
- *Expected:* (Test) Damaging Winds, Heavy Rain, Lightning
- *Possible:* (Test) Destructive Hail Strong Tornadoes
- *Know Where You'll Go:* Have a plan to seek shelter from severe storms this afternoon and evening



***Hypothetical Scenario**

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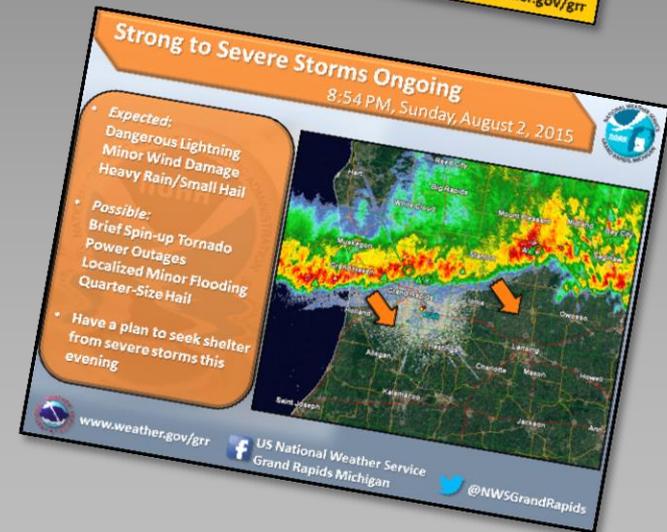
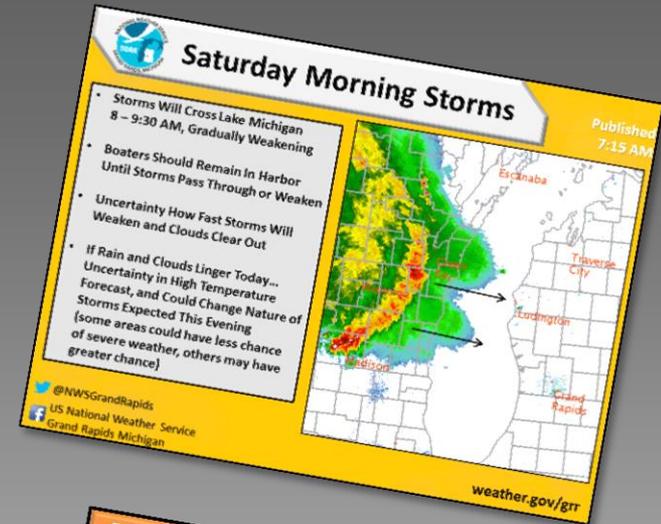
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Use At NWS Grand Rapids

- Still Subject to Refinement
- Social Media an Increasing Workload Challenge
- Social Media Desk When Warranted & Practical



Best Practices

- City Labels: Large and Prominent
- Use Timestamps: Information Ages Quickly
- Be Interactive: Retweet Useful Storm Photos, Answer Questions, Encourage Shares (sparingly)



██████████ We were hoping to help a man scrape & paint his home this afternoon in Grand Rapids. Bummer... is next weekend any better?
Like · Reply · 15 hrs

US National Weather Service Grand Rapids Michigan We will begin a warming trend later in the week. The crystal ball is murky, but there is a chance of a shower or a storm at some point in the weekend.
Like · Reply · 1 · Commented on by Paul Johnson (?) · 6 hrs

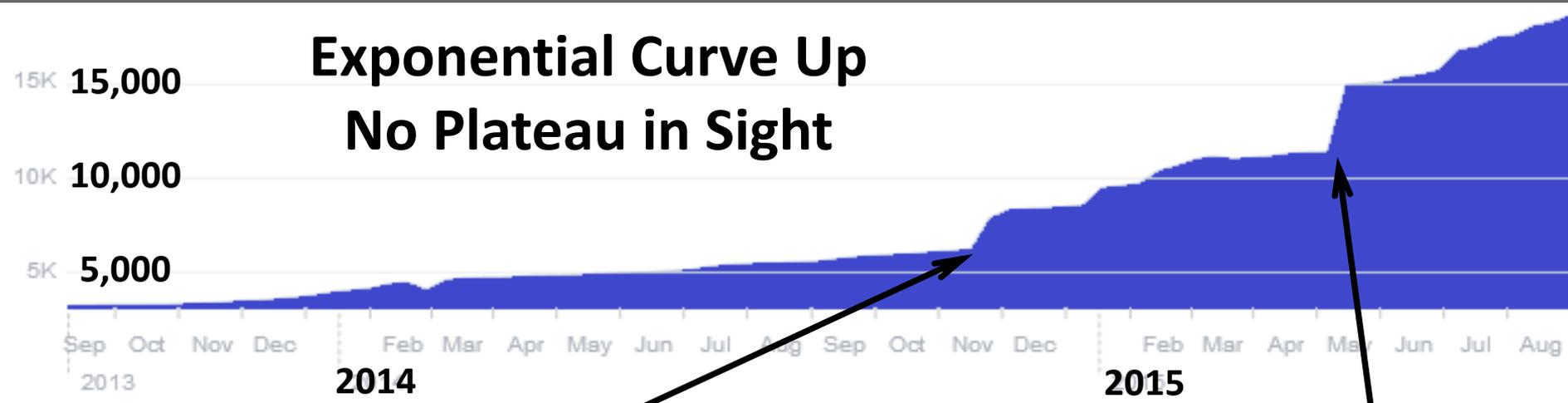
██████████ Hows Muskegon looking 10-9?
Like · Reply · 19 hrs

US National Weather Service Grand Rapids Michigan Main window of concern in Muskegon will be 11 AM - 4 PM. The line of showers/storms will be east by mid-afternoon.
Like · Reply · 1 · Commented on by Evan Webb (?) · 16 hrs

[View more replies](#)

Fascinating Facebook Facts

NWSGrandRapids' Total Page Likes Past 2 Years



**Record November
Lake Effect Snow**

Our most viral
Facebook post:

US National Weather Service Grand Rapids Michigan
Published by Ernie Ostuno [?] · May 2 · Edited · 🌐

We just had an earthquake. Visit our Facebook page for additional information.

536,064 people reached [Boost Post](#)

1.3k Likes 836 Comments 4.2k Shares

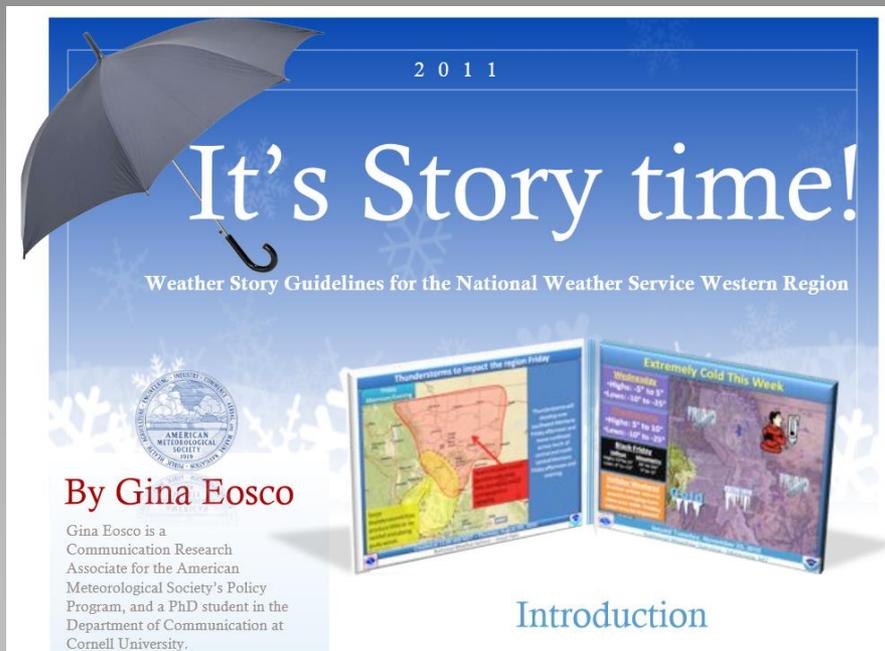
May 2

**Galesburg, MI
Earthquake**

**Over 1.3 million
reached in
5 posts**

Thank You

cort.scholten@noaa.gov



Recommended Reading:

**It's Story Time!
Weather Story Guidelines for
NWS Western Region**

<https://ocwws.weather.gov/afp/pds/Weather%20Story%20Content%20Full%20Paper.pdf>