



# Aware

Aware is published by NOAA's National Weather Service to enhance communications between NWS and the Emergency Management Community and other government and Private Sector Partners.

May 2017

---

## Reminder: New Tropical EAS Codes Take Effect June 1

By [Tim Schott](#), NWS Dissemination Services, Silver Spring, MD

NWS will start using three new NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) and Emergency Alert System (EAS) Event Codes in time for the 2017 hurricane season. This change will not happen in all areas. The three new Event Codes are:

- ◆ Extreme Wind Warning (EWW)
- ◆ Storm Surge Watch (SSA)
- ◆ Storm Surge Warning (SSW)

NWR receivers will alert users in one of the following ways:

- ◆ Units with a limited, caption-like message display likely will show "UNKNOWN WARNING" or "UNKNOWN WATCH."
- ◆ NWS receivers equipped with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) will activate with SAME alarm tones.
- ◆ Receivers equipped with the 1050 Hertz (Hz) Warning Alarm Tone (WAT) will activate for the warnings.



The NWS Dissemination Team is working with receiver manufacturers to add the new codes to newly-manufactured NWR SAME receivers. NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) are coordinating with state and local Emergency Communications Committees, state and local EM agencies and broadcasters' associations to implement the new codes.

EAS equipment manufacturers provided instructions to broadcast customers on how to update software. Any questions on this process should be directed to your weather radio manufacturer. EAS equipment manufacturers are now required to integrate the new codes into newly manufactured equipment.

For more information, see the [Weather-Ready Nation factsheet](#) summarizing these changes.

---

## Broadcast Meteorologists Participate in Damage Survey Workshop

By [Phil Hysell](#), WCM, NWS Blacksburg, VA

Frequently, when a damage survey is conducted, the media and broadcast meteorologists will ask the survey team questions about this process. Unfortunately, NWS staff rarely have enough time to provide a thorough response to these questions while a damage survey is in



NWS Blacksburg, VA, staff take a team of journalists in the field to learn about damage surveys.

progress. To help broadcast meteorologists better understand how storm surveys are conducted, NWS Blacksburg, VA, hosted a damage survey workshop this spring.

At the workshop, NWS offered eight broadcast meteorologists from three different local media markets an overview about storm surveys as well as an introduction to the Damage Assessment Toolkit (DAT). The broadcast meteorologists were broken into groups and each given a photo of storm damage from a past tornado event and an opportunity to use the toolkit in test mode to enter their findings.

Once the groups reconvened, each participant briefed the group about how he or she arrived at a specific Enhance Fujita (EF) rating. Participants were surprised to find varying opinions on an EF rating, even with the DAT and EF-kit resources at their disposal.

This workshop strengthened the already solid relationship between the NWS Blacksburg office and the local media while also providing a platform to help answer questions about the storm survey process. WDBJ-TV Chief Meteorologist Brent Watts said, "Thanks so much for the informative workshop today. It was interesting to see how your team surveys after the storm and the details it takes to put together that final tornado analysis."

---

## Exercise in a Box Targets Chemical Release During Outdoor Event

By WCM [Mike Bardou](#), Meteorologist, [Jamie Enderlen](#), NWS Chicago; [Amos Dodson](#), Meteorologist, NWS Northern Indiana

This spring, forecasters from the NWS Chicago and Northern Indiana offices took part in a district-level tabletop exercise hosted by the Lake and Newton County Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). The exercise was part of FEMA's "Exercise in a Box" pilot program, which provides baseline materials for LEPCs to test how a large outdoor event would be affected by a chemical release. More than 50 core partners took part, including representatives from city, county and state Emergency Management (EM) Agencies, police and fire department, public health offices, the Department of Transportation and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

NWS Chicago staff led off with a short presentation about NWS resources available to support large outdoor events and hazardous materials incidents. Topics included the new Weather Watcher program, Hybrid Single Particle



*NWS teams with FEMA to better prepare for possible chemical attack at a major event.*

Lagrangian Integrated Trajectory (HYSPLIT) capabilities, briefing procedures, and Civil Emergency Message production. The Chicago team then provided a forecast briefing and HYSPLIT plume model for the exercise. NWS Northern Indiana staff provided input and answered questions during the discussion portion of the exercise.

During the exercise review, several attendees expressed appreciation to NWS for taking part and for educating participants about available products and services. Many were unaware of the services available from the NWS and expressed interest in using them for future events and incidents. Ted Bombagetti, district coordinator for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, said, "The NWS is the most under-utilized resource in the world of emergency management. The services they can provide are phenomenal."

Attending these exercises provided a valuable opportunity to build relationships with our partners before an incident occurs, advertise NWS services, and prepare for actual incidents. NWS Chicago and Northern Indiana look forward to participating in future exercises to help build a Weather-Ready Nation.

---

## NWS and USGS Join Forces to Ensure Better Trained Staff

By [Todd Hamill](#), Service Coordination Hydrologist, NWS Southeast River Forecast Center, Peachtree City, GA

As part of ongoing collaboration efforts between NWS and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the NWS Southeast River Forecast Center (SERFC) and the South Atlantic Water Science Center (SAWSC) have teamed up to better educate each agency's staff on the interdependent relationship.

Part 1 in this effort was to coordinate meetings between the NWS Weather Forecast Offices and their local USGS offices. These meetings took place at a mutually coordinated point served by both NWS and the USGS. The meeting was held in the field to educate NWS staff about the basics of collecting streamflow and precipitation data.

Part 2 of the joint program was a Streamgaging 101 class taught by the USGS via a webinar to all of the offices in the SERFC region. The webinar provided some historical information about the USGS and its mission as well as rating curves, instrumentation, gage datums, and dissemination and more.

Part 3 will take place in the fall when the USGS brings its field staff to the RFC and WFO for Forecasting 101. This tutorial will emphasize the importance of the USGS providing accurate and timely data so that NWS hydrologists can provide the most accurate forecasts possible to the public.

We expect that this will not be the last of these field trips and seminars as we continue to educate each of our organizations on the work we do.



*USGS and NWS employees at the river gage, the instrumentation used to measure both stage heights and streamflow in the river.*

---

## Weather-Ready Nation Program Helps Small Community Connect

By [Charlie Woodrum](#), NWS Pacific Region WCM, Honolulu, HI

Last fall, staff at Weather Service Office (WSO) Pago Pago saw an opportunity to better connect with the community by using the Weather-Ready Nation (WRN) Ambassador program. Starting from scratch without any Ambassadors, local NWS staff embraced a modified version of the WRN Ambassador Care Model developed by NWS Twin Cities, MN. This baseline helped the team brainstorm a list of potential candidates to approach with the initiative and to start signing up partners.

Pacific Region offices were each challenged with goals to increase their number of WRN Ambassadors by March 1. WSO Pago Pago eclipsed its goal and its deadline by enrolled 15 Ambassadors by February 1. By reaching its goal first in Pacific Region, the WSO team achieved the "Golden Coconut Award."

As of April 28, the office has 23 WRN Ambassadors, with the number still growing. In addition to signing up so many new organizations in American Samoa, the office also worked closely with the National Park Service to design an office display that was both unique and fully represented its local culture. A Samoan design lies within its WRN emblem in the display. In addition, the displays use native birds and flowers to highlight each organization's name around the logo. Each of the icons used are significant to the people and culture of American Samoa. Below is the meaning of each symbol:

- ◆ Lupe (pigeons): Very important in Samoan history/legends
- ◆ Ti'otala (4 center bird on top of "R"): Foretell of oncoming rain showers
- ◆ Manuma (3 birds next to "W"): Native to Samoan islands
- ◆ Segaula (2 green birds next to "N"): Bird of Manu'a Islands
- ◆ Teuila (Red flowers on the sides of Samoan adage): Flower of Samoan Islands
- ◆ Aute (Red and Yellow flowers below the Samoan adage): Hibiscus flowers
- ◆ Pua (Besides "Ambassadors"): Plumeria flowers

At the bottom of logo, the Samoan adage is: "Ia o gatasi le futia ma le umele." This translates to how everything works well with working together with teamwork or partnership.

As a next step in this initiative, WSO Pago Pago looks forward to welcoming its new WRN Ambassadors to the WSO office and recognizing them with both a certificate and a sign.



*National Park Service employees in Pago Pago personalized the Weather-Ready Nation logo to make it even more meaningful.*

## More Than 4,500 Middle Schoolers Learn Weather Safety at Ball Park



*St. Louis Cardinals Firebird makes off with a weather balloon.*

By [Jim Kramper](#), WCM, NWS St. Louis, MO

To better prepare students for severe weather, NWS St. Louis took part in the annual Weather Day at Busch Memorial Stadium, home of the St. Louis Cardinals.

Sponsored by KSDK Channel 5, the event brought about 4,500 middle school students to Busch stadium before a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game to learn about weather. This year's event was even more successful thanks to the addition of representatives of the St. Louis Science Center and a couple of the Cardinals baseball players.

NWS staf discussed threats from thunderstorms, including lightning, hail, damaging winds and tornadoes. The entire crowd recited "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors" as part of the lightning session. Representatives from the St. Louis Science generated some simulated lightning and used a Van de Graaff generator to get KSDK meteorologist Jessica Quick's hail to stand up.

Cardinals' Catcher Eric Fryer and Pitcher Matt Bowman had a contest to see who could generate the strongest wind gust on a hand held wind meter. The highlight of the event in previous years has been the release of a weather balloon. This year, Cardinals mascot Fredbird made off with the balloon and wanted to keep it. The students attending cheered when he was finally convinced to release the balloon and send it flying off into the sky.

---

## NWS Provides Remote and Onsite IDSS at Coachella Festival 2017

By [Alex Tardy](#), WCM, NWS San Diego, CA

The largest outdoor concert event in the United States was held in the city of Indio in the Coachella Valley, near Palm Springs, CA.

NWS worked directly with the city of Indio EM. The NWS forecast office provided on-site decision support services. Leading up to the event, the EM and fire chief requested daily spot weather forecasts for planning and development of the Incident Event Plan. The event averaged 120,000 in attendance per day (about 500,000 for the two weekends) and new expansions this year allowed for greater onsite attendance.

During the first weekend of NWS onsite weather support the main challenge was locally forced winds from storms passing across northern California.

Incident Command Post houses several local, state and federal agencies near the massive concert grounds.

For the second weekend of support, the forecasters' challenge was the intense heat; temperatures soared to the century mark at the event location. Support provided by the forecasters included being exposed to the Incident Command structure, providing two operational planning briefings per day, viewing onsite activities before attendance, meeting with the risk management team, and visiting ongoing operations at the Riverside County Emergency Operations Center and the City of Indio operations.

NWS also supported the Stagecoach Festival, held during the third and final weekend. Overall the event reached near 900,000 attendees and weather briefings were an integral part of emergency management planning to ensure public safety.



*The Incident Command Post at the Coachella festival housed several local, state and federal agencies near the massive concert grounds.*

**Aware**

NOAA's National Weather Service Analyze, Forecast and Support Office  
Managing Editor: [Melody Magnus](#), Editors: [Donna Franklin](#), [Nancy Lee](#)  
Aware online: [www.weather.gov/publications/aware](http://www.weather.gov/publications/aware) ISSN 1936-8178  
Subscribe/Unsubscribe [www.weather.gov/os/Aware/awarelist.shtml](http://www.weather.gov/os/Aware/awarelist.shtml)