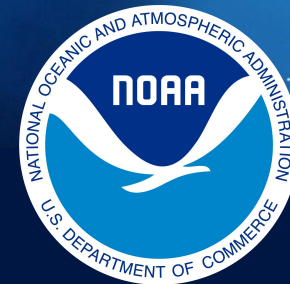


Changes to NWS Operations for 2026

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service

Changes to NWS Forecast Procedures

Old

New

- Full forecast updates and text products sent by 4 AM/PM EDT
- Near term (next ~12 hr) forecast updated every 4 hours
- NWS forecasters spend a significant amount of time on a single, deterministic forecast
- Forecast checked for accuracy and adjusted as needed before spot forecasts are sent



- Full forecast updates and text products sent by 2–3 AM/PM EDT
- Near term forecast only updated if the existing forecast is significantly off-track
- NWS forecasters focus on messaging a probabilistic range of forecast possibilities in addition to the most likely forecast outcome
- No change to ensuring the accuracy of spot forecasts

Changes to NWS Area Forecast Discussion (AFD)

Old

New

Area Forecast Discussion
National Weather Service City, State
252 PM EST Fri Nov 14 2025

.SYNOPSIS...

&&

.NEAR TERM /THROUGH TONIGHT/...

&&

.SHORT TERM /SATURDAY THROUGH SUNDAY NIGHT/...

&&

.LONG TERM /MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY/...

&&

.AVIATION /19Z FRIDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY/...

&&

.MARINE...

&&

**.FIRE WEATHER/TIDESCOASTAL
FLOOD/HYDROLOGY/CLIMO/EQUIPMENT (OPTIONAL)...**

Area Forecast Discussion
National Weather Service City, State
252 PM EST Fri Nov 14 2025

.WHAT HAS CHANGED...

&&

.KEY MESSAGES...

1)

2)

3)

&&

.DISCUSSION...

KEY MESSAGE 1...

KEY MESSAGE DESCRIPTION
Add discussion here

KEY MESSAGE 2...

KEY MESSAGE DESCRIPTION
Add discussion here

KEY MESSAGE 3...

KEY MESSAGE DESCRIPTION
Add discussion here

&&

.AVIATION (required)...

Fire Weather AFD Section Discussion

- **Fire weather concerns could be addressed in the Key Messages section, along with any other weather hazards (i.e. severe weather, flooding, heat, wind, frost/freeze...).**
- **Or, fire weather concerns could be kept in the fire weather section as before.**
- **The Fire Weather Forecast (FWF) product will still include a fire weather discussion with each forecast update. All fire weather forecast information that was previously included in the AFD and the FWF will still be available in the FWF.**
- **Looking for feedback from fire weather partners on whether or not removing .Fire Weather section in the AFD would cause any inconvenience.**

Discontinuation of the FWM

- **The NWS has terminated issuance of the NFDRS Forecast (a.k.a. the FWM) text product with WIMS being replaced by FEMS.**
- **This product was discontinued as of January 26.**

Proposed Red Flag Warning Formatting Changes

- The following are proposed changes to the formatting of the Red Flag Warning text product:

Old

- Affected Area
- Winds
- Relative Humidity
- Temperature
- Timing
- Impacts
- Precautionary/Preparedness Actions



New

- Where
- What
- When
- Impacts
- Precautionary/Preparedness Actions

Proposed Red Flag Warning Formatting Changes

...RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT FROM 9 AM TO 6 PM EST TUESDAY...

The National Weather Service in Albany has issued a Red Flag Warning for which is in effect from 9 AM to 6 PM EST Tuesday.

- * **Affected Area**...The Catskill and portions of the Hudson Valley Fire Danger Rating Areas including Albany, Schenectady, Columbia, Rensselaer, Sullivan, Dutchess, Ulster, Greene and portions of Delaware, Schoharie, and Montgomery Counties.
- * **Timing**...9AM to 6PM Tuesday
- * **Winds**...Northwest 10 to 20 mph with gusts up to 30 to 40 mph.
- * **Relative Humidity**...30 to 40 percent.
- * **Temperatures**...In the 40s.
- * **Impacts**...Any fire that develops will catch and spread quickly. Outdoor burning is not recommended.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A Red Flag Warning means that critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now...or will shortly. A combination of strong winds...low relative humidity...and warm temperatures can contribute to extreme fire behavior.

...RED FLAG WARNING IN EFFECT FROM 11 AM TUESDAY THROUGH 8 PM TUESDAY EVENING FOR WESTERN OKLAHOMA AND WESTERN NORTH TEXAS...

- * **WHAT**...Winds southwest 20 to 30 mph with gusts up to 50 mph. Relative humidity 5 to 10 percent. Temperatures in the upper 80s to middle 90s.
- * **WHERE**...Harper...Woods...Alfalfa...Ellis...Woodward...Major...Roger Mills...Dewey...Custer...Blaine...Beckham...Washita...Caddo...Harmon...Greer...Kiowa...Jackson...Tillman...Comanche...Cotton...Hardeman...Foard...Wilbarger...Wichita...Knox...Baylor...and Archer Counties...
- * **WHEN**...11 AM through 8 PM Tuesday.
- * **IMPACTS**...If fires start, they will spread rapidly and will be difficult to contain.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Conditions are favorable for rapid fire spread which may threaten life and property. Use extra caution with potential ignition sources, especially in grassy areas. Outdoor burning is not recommended.

Be sure to heed any further statements from your local emergency authorities related to evacuation / shelter information.

Proposed Red Flag Warning Formatting Changes

- **These are changes to the formatting only, not to the content of RFWs or to RFW criteria.**
- **The proposal is also soliciting comments on introducing a new “Particularly Dangerous Situation (PDS)” Red Flag Warning. This would rarely if ever be used in NY/New England.**
- **The NWS is soliciting comments through July of 2026 (email was sent to all fire weather partners on Feb 7th).**
- **Any changes likely wouldn’t take effect until well after that.**



**Questions,
comments, or
concerns?**