

Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Albany NY  
943 AM EST Tue Nov 29 2022

...The National Weather Service office at Albany, NY will be temporarily suspending weather balloon launches...

Effective December 1 and until further notice, the National Weather Service office at Albany, NY will be temporarily suspending weather balloon launches. The reasoning behind this decision is twofold, the first of which continues to be the global supply chain disruption of helium, with a secondary reason attributed to the delayed arrival of a new upper air inflation building and helium piping at our new facility located in the ETEC building on the University at Albany campus.

When both the helium piping and new inflation building are installed at the ETEC building, we hope to resume upper air operations in March of 2023. This target date is contingent upon the successful installation of the items listed above. In the meantime, other real-time remotely-sensed data sources will be used to supplement the unavailability of twice per day balloon launches from Albany. These include remotely-sensed microwave atmospheric profiles from NOAA and DoD polar-orbiting satellite spacecraft, instrument-outfitted aircraft, and from the New York State Mesonet's profiler network. The latter two sources provide hourly profiles of temperature and moisture to National Weather Service forecasters for near real-time use.

Radiosondes are instruments attached to weather balloons that send back a wide range of upper atmospheric data to support weather forecasts, including temperature, dew point, relative humidity, barometric pressure, wind speed and wind direction. Radiosondes are one of many technologies that collect earth observational data for use in weather modeling and forecasting. Data is also collected from instruments to include surface observing stations, satellites, radars, and buoys.

If you or your organization have any questions about these changes, please contact:

Christopher Gitro  
Meteorologist-in-Charge  
National Weather Service  
Albany, NY Weather Forecast Office  
Phone: 518-626-7541  
E-mail: christopher.gitro@noaa.gov

\$\$