

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-313**

**APRIL 2, 2024**

**Operations and Services**

**Marine and Coastal Weather Services, NWSPD 10-3**

**SPECIAL MARINE WARNINGS**

**NOTICE:** This publication is available at: <https://www.weather.gov/directives/>.

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**Type of Issuance:** Routine – Admin Update

**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-313, "*Special Marine Warnings*," dated April 2, 2024. This is an administrative update made only to fix the broken links under Notice and Section 2.3.5. No content changes were made with this update, and the effective date was not affected.

March 19, 2024

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Date

**Special Marine Warnings**

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**1 Introduction**

This procedural instruction provides detailed information on a product Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) and Weather Service Office (WSO) Pago Pago issue concerning ongoing or imminent marine weather hazards. The Special Marine Warning (SMW) product provides the marine community with vital information to protect life and property.

**2 Special Marine Warning**

Product category SMW; Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) Significance / Phenomena MA.W.

**2.1 Mission Connection**

The SMW product is used to provide specific details that aid in the protection of life and property. WFO forecasters and WSO Pago Pago forecasters issue polygon based special marine warnings within their marine areas of responsibility for their coastal marine zones or Great Lakes marine zones to provide advanced notice to mariners of potentially hazardous weather conditions. SMWs are not issued for Offshore or High Seas areas, except in designated areas along the East Coast.

## **2.2 Issuance Guidelines**

### **2.2.1 Creation Software**

WFOs use the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) WarnGen Application to issue the SMW product. WSO Pago Pago issues the SMW with regionally approved software.

### **2.2.2 Issuance Criteria**

WFOs and WSO Pago Pago should issue the SMW product for short duration (2 hours or less) sustained marine thunderstorm winds or associated frequent gusts of 34 knots (KT) or greater; and / or hail 3/4 inch or more in diameter; and / or waterspouts. Forecasters should also issue the SMW for sustained non-convective short duration winds or associated frequent gusts of 34 KT or greater (gale force or stronger).

- a. Where VTEC is not used in the Alaska and Pacific Regions, issue the SMW for Ashfall warnings.

### **2.2.3 Issuance Time**

The SMW product is non-scheduled and event-driven.

### **2.2.4 Valid Time**

The SMW product is valid from the time of issuance until the expiration time.

### **2.2.5 Universal Geographic Code (UGC)**

The SMW product will contain marine-based zone UGC codes.

### **2.2.6 Product Expiration Time**

The product expiration time should not exceed 2 hours beyond issuance time. A new SMW should be issued if the event is expected to continue past two hours beyond issuance time.

- a. Where SMW is used for Ashfall Warnings, the product expiration time should not exceed 6 hours beyond issuance time. A new SMW should be issued if the event is expected to continue past six hours beyond issuance time.

## **2.3 Technical Description**

The SMW product will follow the format and content described in this section.

### **2.3.1 Mass News Disseminator (MND) Broadcast Line**

The SMW product should include the broadcast line “BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED”. If a state does not require Emergency Alert System (EAS) activation for the SMW product, the broadcast line will read “BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED”. The term “BULLETIN” is used when information is sufficiently urgent to warrant breaking into a normal broadcast.

### 2.3.2 MND Header

The SMW MND Header is “Special Marine Warning.”

### 2.3.3 Content

The SMW product will be issued in standard bullet format, as outlined in NWS Instruction (NWSI) [10-1701, \*Text Product Formats and Codes\*](#).

Storm motion and wind speed should be expressed in knots (KT).

SMWs may be issued while a Small Craft Advisory, Gale, Storm or Hurricane Force Wind Warning (not associated with a tropical cyclone warning) is in effect. When a tropical cyclone warning is in effect, SMWs should only be issued for waterspouts.

For events impacting both land and water, separate warnings will be issued. SMWs will not include any portion of adjacent land areas.

### 2.3.4 Precautionary/Preparedness Actions

If a Tornado Watch is in effect for the area, the Tornado Watch number may be included in this section of the SMW product. Where SMWs are issued for Ashfall Warnings, mariners are encouraged to report ashfall and other volcanic impact encounters.

### 2.3.5 Format

The format of the SMW can be seen in Figure 1. The SMW is a non-segmented product. Please reference [NWSI 10-1702, \*Universal Geographic Code \(UGC\)\*](#), for additional information on product segmentation. For detailed VTEC information, please reference [NWSI 10-1703 \*Valid Time Event Code \(VTEC\)\*](#).

This product is available in industry standard encoding and languages, and may include, but not be limited to, American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), Extensible Markup Language (XML), Wireless Markup Language (WML) and HyperText Markup Language (HTML).

```
(WMO HEADER) (UTC ISSUANCE DATE TIME)
(AWIPS ID)
(AREAL UGC CODE[S])-(EXPIRATION TIME)-
(VTEC STRING)

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED
Special Marine Warning
National Weather Service (City)(State)
Time AM/PM TIME_ZONE Day of week Mon DD YYYY

The National Weather Service in (WFO/WSO Location) has issued a
```

- Special Marine Warning for...(marine forecast area affected) (when multiple zones are covered, may list only the location points at the far end of the combined zones, and eliminate the intermediate points) (should list the zones in the numerical order of the UGC codes)
  - Until (ending effective time)
  - At (time)...(description of storm event, movement)
- HAZARD...
- SOURCE...
- IMPACT...
- Locations may reference marine and coastal land points, etc.)
- PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...
- &&
- LAT...LON
- TIME...MOT...LOC
- [Mandatory list of latitude / longitude points outlining the forecaster drawn polygon in WarnGen and time, location, and movement of event being tracked. Special Marine Warnings may include special tags after the && to provide better definition, similar to other short term warnings.]
- \$\$

**Figure 1. Special Marine Warning (SMW) Format**

## 2.4 Updates, Amendments and Corrections

Updates and amendments are not applicable. WFOs and WSO Pago Pago will reissue an SMW for significant grammatical or format errors in marine zones already covered by a warning. WFOs and WSOs will issue a Marine Weather Statement (MWS), as described in NWSI 10-314, to provide the public with follow-up information or to cancel all or part of an SMW.

APPENDIX A – Examples of Special Marine Warnings

WHUS52 KMFL 082038  
SMWMFL  
AMZ610-082145-  
/O.NEW.KMFL.MA.W.0438.230908T2038Z-230908T2145Z/

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED  
Special Marine Warning  
National Weather Service Miami FL  
438 PM EDT Fri Sep 8 2023

The National Weather Service in Miami has issued a

\* Special Marine Warning for...  
Lake Okeechobee...

\* Until 545 PM EDT.

\* At 438 PM EDT, severe thunderstorms capable of producing  
waterspouts were located along a line extending from near Calusa to  
near Moore Haven, moving east at 15 knots.

HAZARD...Waterspouts, wind gusts 34 knots or greater, and small  
hail.

SOURCE...Radar.

IMPACT...Waterspouts can easily overturn boats and create locally  
hazardous seas. Small craft could be damaged in briefly  
higher winds and suddenly higher waves.

\* Locations impacted include...  
Canal Point, Liberty Point, Clewiston, Sand Cut, Pahokee, Buckhead  
Ridge, Lake Harbor, Calusa and Moore Haven.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Move to safe harbor until hazardous weather passes.

Report severe weather to the Coast Guard or the National Weather  
Service. You can also share your report with NWS Miami on Facebook  
and Twitter.

&&

LAT...LON 2716 8071 2711 8066 2696 8061 2696 8055  
2688 8055 2679 8063 2674 8063 2666 8068  
2663 8075 2664 8082 2677 8107 2681 8114  
2686 8118 2707 8108 2715 8098 2719 8091

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2717 8091 2714 8087 2719 8084 2721 8080  
TIME...MOT...LOC 2038Z 267DEG 14KT 2705 8102 2690 8109

WATERSPOUT...POSSIBLE  
HAIL...<.75IN  
WIND...>34KTS

\$\$

WHUS51 KLWX 282326  
SMWLWX  
ANZ535-536-290100-  
/O.NEW.KLWX.MA.W.0177.230728T2326Z-230729T0100Z/

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED  
Special Marine Warning  
National Weather Service Baltimore MD/Washington DC  
726 PM EDT Fri Jul 28 2023

The National Weather Service in Sterling Virginia has issued a

- \* Special Marine Warning for...  
Tidal Potomac from Indian Head to Cobb Island MD...  
Tidal Potomac from Key Bridge to Indian Head MD...
- \* Until 900 PM EDT.
- \* At 726 PM EDT, strong thunderstorms were located along a line extending from 13 nm northwest of Leesylvania State Park to 13 nm west of Aquia Creek, moving east at 30 knots.

HAZARD...Wind gusts 34 knots or greater.

SOURCE...Radar indicated.

IMPACT...Boaters in small craft could be thrown overboard by suddenly higher winds and waves capsizing their vessel.

- \* Locations impacted include...  
Potomac Creek, Widewater, Maryland Point, Nanjemoy Creek, Port Tobacco River, Leesylvania State Park, Quantico, Swan Point, Gunston Hall, Mathias Point, U.S. 301 Nice Memorial Bridge, Mason Neck State Park, Indian Head, Occoquan Bay, Popes Creek, Brent Point, Smallwood State Park and Fairview Beach.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Move to safe harbor immediately as gusty winds and high waves are expected.

Frequent lightning is occurring with these storms. If caught on the

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open water stay below deck if possible, keep away from ungrounded metal objects.

&&

LAT...LON 3850 7733 3866 7724 3866 7719 3864 7720  
3865 7716 3870 7720 3871 7718 3867 7708  
3863 7709 3851 7724 3839 7723 3846 7701  
3835 7696 3830 7688 3829 7688 3829 7701  
3838 7706 3833 7717 3833 7730 3842 7733

TIME...MOT...LOC 2326Z 259DEG 30KT 3874 7745 3835 7761

HAIL...0.00IN

WIND...>34KTS

\$\$

WHUS54 KCRP 090003

SMWCRP

GMZ231-232-250-270-090100-

/O.NEW.KCRP.MA.W.0002.240109T0003Z-240109T0100Z/

BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED

Special Marine Warning

National Weather Service Corpus Christi TX

603 PM CST Mon Jan 8 2024

The National Weather Service in Corpus Christi has issued a

\* Special Marine Warning for...

Baffin Bay and Upper Laguna Madre...

Coastal waters from Baffin Bay to Port Aransas out 20 NM...

Corpus Christi and Nueces Bays...

Waters from Baffin Bay to Port Aransas from 20 to 60 NM...

\* Until 700 PM CST.

\* At 602 PM CST, strong thunderstorms were located along a line extending from near Packery Channel to near Malaquite Beach to near Riviera Beach, moving southeast at 50 knots.

HAZARD...Wind gusts to 40 knots.

SOURCE...Radar.

IMPACT...Expect wind gusts in excess of 34 knots, suddenly higher waves, frequent lightning, and heavy downpours. Make sure all on board are wearing life jackets.

\* Locations impacted include...

Packery Channel and Malaquite Beach.



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PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Move to safe harbor until hazardous weather passes.

&&

LAT...LON 2724 9736 2763 9722 2724 9737 2727 9767

2734 9754 2744 9748 2741 9747 2728 9754

2728 9753 2733 9740 2761 9729 2770 9718

2768 9717 2762 9721 2765 9718 2776 9711

2728 9648 2715 9663

TIME...MOT...LOC 0002Z 315DEG 52KT 2752 9724 2738 9736 2724 9771

HAIL...0.00IN

WIND...40KTS

\$\$