Hawai'i Ho'ohekili

Skywarn Weather Spotter Newsletter
National Weather Service, Honolulu, HI

Dry Season Edition, 2020 | Issued — May 2020 | Spotter Newsletter Volume 19

Inside this edition: Changes to the Wireless Emergency Alerts for Flash Flood Warnings, a review on spotter calling procedures, and a finalized Skywarn training video!

Refresher spotter reporting

What to do when reporting:

Call the Skywarn Line at 1-800-833-0404 (primary) or 808-973-5280 (secondary)

- Give your name, spotter number, and location
- Be brief and concise when you are reporting. Severe weather may be imminent.
- Report any type of hazardous weather such as tornadoes, hail, winds greater than 50 mph, flooding, thunder, lightning, funnel clouds, water sports, surf greater than 20 feet, and any weather related damage.

Skywarn Spotter Safety

When reporting to our office, safety is of utmost importance to us. Remember out in the field to follow this simple acronym commonly used by emergency personnel.

Awareness: Constantly observing the situation around you. Stay Safe!

Communicating your whereabouts to others on a regular basis and having multiple lines of communications available can keep you and others safe.

Escape Routes: Having an escape route is vital when entering a potentially dangerous area. As part of being aware, note the escape routes available to you.

Safe Zone: If you cannot get to escape routes due to rapidly changing conditions, find your nearest safe zones or shelter.

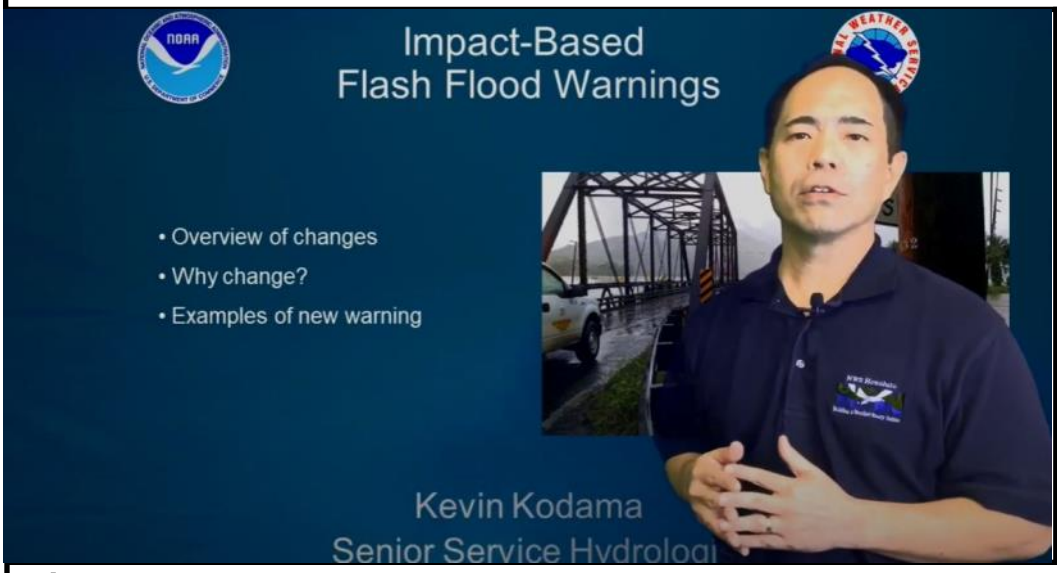
'Olelo No'Eau Hawaiian Proverbs-
Hawaiian Proverb:"Lele ka 'iwa, malie kai ko'o"
English Translation: When the 'iwa (frigate bird) flies, the rough sea will be calm.

Explanation: The Hawaiians used animal behavior also as a sign of weather prediction. By watching the 'iwa soar on high, it was a sign it was going to be windy.

Changes to the Wireless Emergency Alerts for Flash Flood Warnings

- On February 19,2020, there was a national change to the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) program that impacts what Flash Flood Warnings will be sent to cell phones.

Flash Flood warnings now have damage threat tags, so WEAs will be issued for only the most life-threatening flood events. To reduce the number of WEAs for flash flooding, a damage threat tag of "**considerable**" or "**catastrophic**" will be given for each warning.



New Impact-Based Flash Flood Warnings Video by our senior hydrologist Kevin Kodama:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6TORKiZwy4

Please Note:

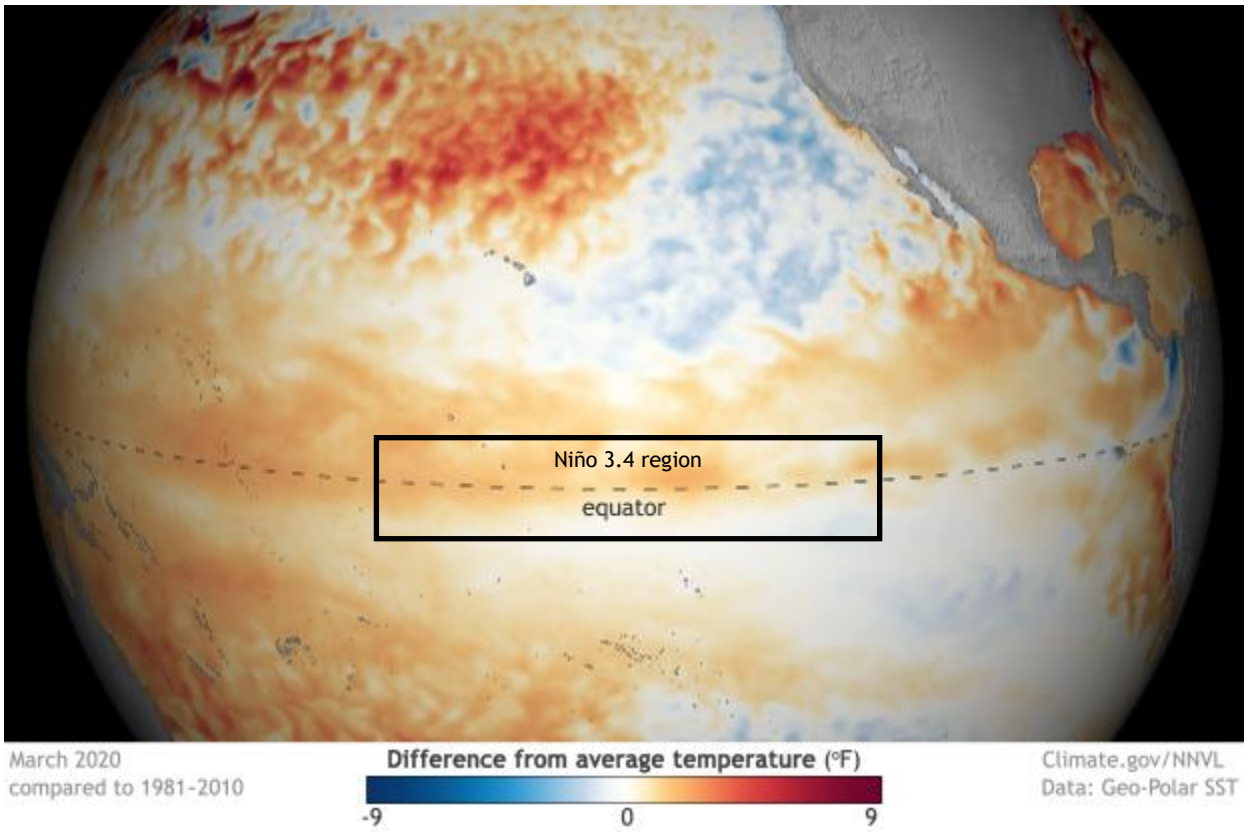
This change is only for Wireless Emergency Alerts which are sent to cell phones. All Flash Flood Warnings will still be sent over the Emergency Alert Systems (EAS) broadcast on the radio, TV, and will continue to activate NOAA Weather Radio Receivers.

New Skywarn Training video now available!

- A new Hawaii Skywarn training has been created!
- To get your refresher training, watch the video and then take a short quiz to receive your renewed Skywarn certification for another 3 years!
- It will allow us to recertify you even if you're not able to make it to an in-person training event.

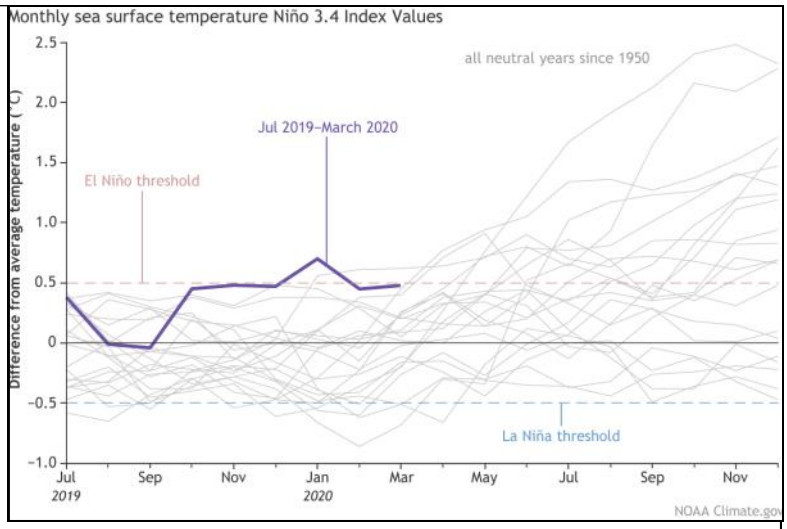
Skywarn Video:
https:www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlttvKlyPFk

In our video, you will be able to meet some of our staff. Chris Brenchley (Meteorologist in Charge), Ashley Evans (Director of Operations), John Bravender (Warning Coordinator Meteorologist), and Chevy Chevalier (Meteorologist) will guide you through the online training. Local videos are implemented to make sure spotters keep safety as a priority when reporting the weather to us.



April 2020 ENSO Update

Sea surface temperatures have remained warmer than average, but the tropical atmosphere shifted away from its El Niño-ish appearance during February. The lack of coupling between the ocean and atmosphere leads forecasters to once again favor the continuation of ENSO-neutral with a ~60% chance during the summer, and remaining most likely during the autumn.



Monthly sea surface temperature in the Niño 3.4 region of the tropical Pacific for 2019-2020 (purple line) and all other years starting from neutral winters since 1950. Climate.gov graph based on ERSSTv5 temperature data from NCEI.

The ocean surface temperatures in the Niño-3.4 region (see fig) have been bubbling around +0.5°C, our El Niño threshold. If you look at monthly averages in this region going back to October 2019, we've been between +0.45°C and +0.50°C for five of the six months! That's pretty special! It's special because there isn't an analogous streak, remaining right at +0.50°C, in the historical record going back to 1950. However, keep in mind that right now the "departure from average" is being computed relative to 1986-2015 seasonal averages. Eventually, because we roll the climatology forward in time, the current numbers will change when we update the reference (averaging) period to 1991-2020. Because sea surface temperatures are above average over most of the Tropics right now, suggesting that the updated 30-year average will be warmer than the 1986-2015 average, we are betting these historical index values will eventually be revised downwards.

(Discussion issued by CPC, and the ENSO blog from NOAA.)