Service Change Notice 22-127
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
930 AM EST Thu Dec 15 2022

To: Subscribers:
- NOAA Weather Wire Service
- Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
- NOAAPort
- Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From: Mary Mullusky, Chief
Forecast Services Division

Subject: Changes to Public Forecast Zones for WFO Pittsburgh, PA:
Effective March 8, 2023

Effective Wednesday, March 8, 2023, by 4:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Pittsburgh, PA (PBZ) will complete changes to the Public Weather Forecast Zone encompassing Indiana County in western Pennsylvania. Indiana County will be split into a western and eastern half to better capture the topography difference. After this change, all forecasts and related products will use the zone numbers and names shown in Table 2 below.

If March 8, 2023 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 9, 2023 at 2100 UTC.

These changes will result in more geographically precise forecast, watch and warning products for the general public and will enhance web-based graphical product consistency and appearance.

Indiana County’s current zone will be converted into two separate zones. These new zones are being divided to optimize issuance of hazard products for conditions that vary significantly from lower elevations in the western part of the county to the eastern part. The new zones are listed in Table 2.

Table 1. Universal Geographic Codes (UGC): Current Public Zone Name
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PAZ023: Indiana County

Table 2. UGC: New Public Zone Name
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PAZ077: Indiana County
PAZ078: Higher Elevations of Indiana County

Table 3. NWS products affected by the WFO Pittsburgh, PA by these Public forecast zone changes are listed below.
Product Name | WMO Heading | AWIPS ID
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Flood Watch | WGUS61 KPBZ | FFAPBZ
Special Weather Statement | WWUS81 KPBZ | SPSPBZ
Zone Forecast Product | FPUS51 KPBZ | ZFPPBZ
Hazardous Weather Outlook | FLUS41 KPBZ | HWOPBZ
Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory | WWUS71 KPBZ | NPWPBZ
Winter Weather Message | WWUS41 KPBZ | WSWPBZ
Area Forecast Matrix | FOUS51 KPBZ | AFMPBZ
Point Forecast Matrices | FOUS51 KPBZ | PFMPBZ
Flood Watch/Warning/Advisory | WGUS61 KPBZ | FFAPBZ
Hydrologic Outlook | FGUS71 KPBZ | ESFPBZ
Hydrologic Statement | FGUS81 KPBZ | RVSPBZ
Hydrologic Summary | SRUS41 KPBZ | RVAPBZ
Daily River and Lake Summary | FGUS51 KPBZ | RVDPBZ
Public Information Statement | NOUS41 KPBZ | PNSPBZ
Area Forecast Discussion | FXUS61 KPBZ | AFDPBZ
Air Quality Alert Message | AEUS71 KPBZ | AQAPBZ

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these weather forecast zone changes.

Preliminary shapefiles for public weather forecast zones are available online at:
https://www.weather.gov/gis/PublicZones
https://www.weather.gov/gis/Counties

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on January 17, 2023.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:
https://www.weather.gov/pittsburgh/zonechange

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:
https://www.weather.gov/notification/

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