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Director, Office of Dissemination

Subject: Information to Assist Users Migrating to NWS-Direct Sources of NWS Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) Messages, Effective on or after July 20, 2023


When this change was implemented on July 20, 2023, NWS discontinued the transmission of the full suite of NWS CAP version 1.2 (v1.2) messages to IPAWS and began transmitting only those CAP messages to IPAWS that are intended for activation or deactivation of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). As mentioned in SCN 23-82, the change also results in inconsistencies between the NWS CAP messages transmitted to IPAWS for WEA and the full suite of NWS CAP messages available from NWS-direct sources. Therefore, NWS CAP users should not expect to find correlation between the NWS CAP messages in IPAWS and the full suite of NWS CAP messages available from NWS-direct sources. CAP users should beware that monitoring both IPAWS and NWS-direct sources for NWS CAP messages could result in duplicate alerting.

When processing CAP messages, CAP users should adhere to the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) CAP standard and handle the CAP message as defined by the value of the CAP “status” element. For example, a “status” value of “Actual” means the alert is actionable by all targeted recipients, whereas a “status” value of “Test” means all recipients should disregard. Failure to properly handle a CAP message can result in undesirable consequences such as public confusion and false alarms.

For information about the OASIS CAP v1.2 standard, please visit https://vlab.noaa.gov/web/nws-common-alerting-protocol/cap-documentation
For more information about NWS use of CAP, please visit https://vlab.noaa.gov/web/nws-common-alerting-protocol

For general information regarding NWS use of CAP, please contact:

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