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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 23-73
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1250 PM EDT Thu Jun 29 2023

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

From: Douglas C. Young
 Chief, Digital and Graphical Information Support Branch

Subject: Implementation of Partial County Alerting via NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for Sonoma County, California: Effective on or after September 19, 2023

Based on positive feedback from the broadcast community, local officials and the public, NWS San Francisco Bay Area/Monterey (MTR) will implement Partial County Alerting (PCA) for Sonoma County, California effective on or after September 19, 2023.

The following weather warnings from WFO MTR are impacted for this PCA implementation:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Dust Storm Warning	WWUS56 KMTR	DSWMTR
Flash Flood Warning	WGUS56 KMTR	FFWMTR
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUUS56 KMTR	SVRMTR
Tornado Warning	WFUS56 KMTR	TORMTR

The following Non-Weather Emergency Messages (NWEMs), originated by the Sonoma County Emergency Management Agency and further disseminated by NWS, are impacted:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Civil Emergency Message	WOUS46 KMTR	CEMMTR
Evacuation Immediate	WOUS46 KMTR	EVIMTR
Fire Warning	WOUS46 KMTR	FRWMTR

NWS disseminates weather warnings via NWR and the EAS. While many NWS warnings have become more refined in areal extent using forecaster-defined polygons, these warnings are generally conveyed via NWR and EAS on a whole (entire) county basis. However, NWS has the capability to disseminate these warnings via NWR and EAS for smaller areal sections of counties. NWS refers to these areas as county partitions; the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) refers to them as subdivisions. Disseminating warnings through NWR and EAS using partitions is referred to as PCA.

PCA reduces the geographical overalerting of warnings by more closely associating polygon-defined warnings and polygon-defined NWEMs with county partitions. With PCA, NWR Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME)-equipped users may select the county partition(s) for which they will receive automated alerts. Similarly, PCA allows broadcasters to choose the county partition(s) to which they will convey NWS warnings through the EAS. PCA implementation may help limit and better target EAS activation in a given media market.

WFO San Francisco has conferred with local emergency managers, state and local government officials and broadcasters serving Sonoma County and will implement eight partial county zones for Sonoma County. A comprehensive description with maps and the new SAME and EAS Location Codes associated with each Sonoma County partial county zone is provided online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/mtr/PartialCountyAlertingSonomaCounty>

The shapefiles with the Sonoma County Partial County boundaries for NWR and EAS are posted online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/AWIPSShapefiles>

Instructions for programming your SAME-equipped NWR receiver with the new partial county SAME Location Codes are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/pca/nwr>

Once established in operations, the boundaries of the Sonoma County partitions are fixed, unless modified at a later date through a formal change process.

A comprehensive description of PCA and the expansion of PCA to select US counties is online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/pca>

WFO San Francisco anticipates that additional NWS warnings will use PCA in the future. Any service enhancements will be preceded by a future Service Change Notice.

For questions or concerns on the PCA implementation for Sonoma County, please contact:

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For comments or questions on the national level PCA initiative, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification>

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