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Service Change Notice 24-116
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1100 AM EST Mon Dec 23 2024

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

From: Douglas C. Young, Chief
 NWS 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 Boulder County, Colorado: Effective on or about March 18, 2025

Based on positive feedback from the broadcast community, local officials and the public, National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Denver/Boulder (BOU) will implement Partial County Alerting (PCA) for Boulder County, Colorado effective on or about March 18, 2025.

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

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Dust Storm Warning	WWUS55 KBOU	DSWBOU
Flash Flood Warning	WGUS55 KBOU	FFWBOU
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUUS55 KBOU	SVRBOU
Snow Squall Warning	WWUS55 KBOU	SQWBOU
Tornado Warning	WFUS55 KBOU	TORBOU

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 over-alerting 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 select the county partition(s) they will convey NWS warnings through the EAS. PCA implementation may help limit and better target EAS activation in a given media market.

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

<https://www.weather.gov/bou/EASBoulderCntyChange>

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

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

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 28, 2025.

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 Boulder 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 BOU 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 Boulder County, please contact:

Greg Heavener
Warning Coordination Meteorologist
WFO Denver/Boulder
Boulder, CO
Telephone: 303-494-3210, x726
Email: greg.heavener@noaa.gov

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

Brian Miretzky
Meteorologist, NWS Dissemination Services
NWS Headquarters
Silver Spring, MD
brian.miretzky@noaa.gov

National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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