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PNSWSH

Public Information Statement 26-62 Updated
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
955 AM EDT Fri Sep 18 2026

To: Subscribers:
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 -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
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From: George Jungbluth, Director
 Mission, Systems and Technology

Subject: Updated: Seeking comments through November 20, 2026, on
Transition to Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) as the Primary NWS Watch,
Warning, and Advisory Dissemination Product Format and Potentially
Discontinuing the VTEC format.

Updated to extend the comment period through November 20, 2026, and
corrected the CFW (instead of CWF) AWOS/AFOS PILs and associated WMO
Headers, and updated the CAP_Messages.pdf document to remove old alerts.

The NWS is modernizing its infrastructure and dissemination to streamline
operations, increase reliability, and enhance our services. Currently,
Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) format is the primary format for
disseminating NWS watches, warnings, and advisories. CAP formatted
messages are currently derived from the VTEC format. This VTEC creation
process limits the most effective use of digital services, especially
geospatial information, for watch and warning products.

We are seeking comments through November 30, 2026 on a proposal to
transition entirely to the CAP message format for watch, warning, and
advisory dissemination and potentially discontinuing the use of VTEC.
The CAP messages are essential for current dissemination systems
including the FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS),
and will continue to include elements of the VTEC coding such as event
tracking, calls to action, and impacts-based messaging. The NWS will
provide additional proposal details including enhancements to future CAP
messages after evaluating public comments.

The following is a brief summary of some alerts that would potentially no
longer have associated VTEC coding and instead be issued only in CAP
format.

Watch, Warning, Advisory Type	AWIPS / AFOS PIL	WMO Heading
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Severe Thunderstorm	SVRxxx	WUaaii
and Tornado	TORxxx	WFaaii
	WCNxxx	WWaaii

Tropical Storm, Hurricane, and Storm Surge	CFWxxx TCVxxx EWWxxx	WHaaii Wtaaii WFaaii
Winter Storm	WSWxxx	WWaaii
Coastal Flood	CFWxxx	WHaaii
Flash Flood	FFAxxx FFWxxx FLWxxx	WGaaii WGaaii WGaaii
Tsunami	TSUxxx	WEaaii
Marine and Coastal Hazards	MWWxxx CFWxxx SMWxxx	WHaaii WHaaii WHaaii

A comprehensive list of NWS CAP messages is available in this document: [CAP Messages.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/ref/CAP_Messages.pdf), full URL:
https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/ref/CAP_Messages.pdf

Further information about NWS CAP format can be found at
<https://vlab.noaa.gov/web/nws-common-alerting-protocol/cap-documentation>

We are looking for comments and feedback on how long it will take to accommodate these changes, what concerns you may have about this change, and whether you would like to be part of a future webinar.

Please provide your feedback via this brief, two question survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CAPTransition>

Questions on the proposal may be sent to:

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Office of Dissemination
Email: nws.webfeedback@noaa.gov

National Public Information Statements are online at:

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

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