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Public Information Notice 16-30
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From: Eli Jacks
 Chief, Forecast Services Division

Subject: Effective September 7, 2016, NWS is launching a new website for the NWS Hazard Simplification Project and soliciting feedback on two optional hazard maps for the weather.gov home page

Effective September 7, 2016, NWS is launching a new website for the NWS Hazard Simplification Project and soliciting feedback on two optional hazard maps for the weather.gov home page.

Over the past two years, via its Hazard Simplification Project (known as Haz Simp), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) NWS has been investigating options for simplifying and clarifying the messages for weather and water hazards.

Specifically, NWS is conducting an examination of messages issued using our "Watch," "Warning" and "Advisory" (WWA) system to assess its clarity and effectiveness. This examination is focusing both on the language used in NWS messaging to convey forecaster expectations of hazard timing, certainty and impacts; and also on how well our graphics convey these same expectations. The results of this examination could lead to improvements to better enable users to take life- and property-saving action.

The purpose of this Public Information Notice is twofold. First, we are announcing the release of a new NWS Haz Simp website at:

<http://www.weather.gov/hazardsimplification/>

This site contains links to surveys to collect feedback on proposed messaging options, as well as information on project history, details and reference sources.

Second, based on project feedback collected to date, we are announcing the availability of the first in a series of public comment opportunities on proposed changes to the WWA system. These proposed changes fall into one of two categories. The first category, called WWA "Repairs," includes changes that could take place relatively quickly via minor adjustments to policy or software. The second category, called WWA "Revamp," refers to changes that would require extensive coordination, and major adjustments to policy and/or systems.

This first comment opportunity falls in the "Repair" category. We are asking for public comment on two prototype, optional hazards maps that could be used on the weather.gov home page

<http://www.weather.gov>

The current hazards map on the NWS homepage features 122 colors (one for each individual WWA hazard). We have received feedback that this map sometimes becomes confusing and cluttered during active weather. The proposed prototype maps have been designed with the goal of addressing this issue. Based on public comment, one or both of these maps could be displayed as options on the weather.gov homepage, in addition to the current WWA map.

To access more detail on the map options and provide your comments, please use the survey link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DPQH67G>

Live, automatically updated versions of these map options are also available at the following link:

http://www.weather.gov/crh/alt_wwa

There are no immediate plans for operational changes at this time; however, your comments will play a major role in any future decisions. Additional comment opportunities will be announced via additional Public Information Notices in the weeks ahead. The associated survey links will be added to the website as they become available.

If you have questions or comments about the NWS Hazard Simplification Project, please email:

Hazard Simplification Group

hazsimp@noaa.gov

National Public Information Notices are online at:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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