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Public Information Statement 18-27
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
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To: Subscribers:
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 -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
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From: Allison Allen
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Subject: Alerting Partners to the Potential for Non-sequential Tropical
Cyclone (TC) Storm Numbering in the Atlantic Basin: Effective Immediately

This Public Information Statement is issued to alert users of NWS TC
products that non-sequential numbering of TCs in the Atlantic basin may be
necessary effective immediately.

NWS Instruction (NWSI) 10-601: "Tropical Cyclone Forecast Center
Products", details storm numbering and naming conventions in Section 3,
which explains that all systems requiring advisory packages (i.e., TCs or
potential TCs, whether tropical or subtropical) will be sequentially
numbered within their basin of origin. NWSI 10-607: "Tropical Cyclone
Advisory Products" is online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/sym/pd01006007curr.pdf>

TC advisory products from the National Hurricane Center include:

Product -----	AWIPS PIL* -----	WMO Header -----
TC Public Advisory	TCPAT/1-5/	WTNT/31-35/ KNHC
TC Wind Speed Probabilities	PWSAT/1-5/	FONT/11-15/ KNHC
TC Forecast / Advisory	TCMAT/1-5/	WTNT/21-25/ KNHC
TC Discussion	TCDAT/1-5/	WTNT/41-45/ KNHC
National TC VTEC Product	TCVAT/1-5/	WTNT/81-85/ KNHC
TC Update	TCUAT/1-5/	WTNT/61-65/ KNHC
Aviation TC Advisory Message	TCANT/1-5/	FKNT/21-25/ KNHC

*AWIPS PIL - Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS)
Product Identifier Label

These products use five distinct bins (i.e., AWIPS PILs and World
Meteorological Organization (WMO) Headers that vary only by the last
digit, a numerical value from 1-5). The bins are used in sequential order
such that the first system requiring advisory packages in the Atlantic
basin is storm number AL01 and has products with AWIPS PILs and WMO
headers ending in 1 (i.e., bin 1), the second system (AL02) has products
ending in 2, etc. The sixth system of the year (AL06) in a particular

basin will have products that end in 1, cycling back to the beginning of the bin numbers as all of the bin numbers up to that point (i.e., 1-5) have recently been used.

There is a complication, however, in the 2018 hurricane season. Hurricane Florence has the storm number AL06 and is using AWIPS PILs and WMO headers ending with 1. Currently, advisories are being written for systems ending with 3, 4 and 5 for Helene (AL08), Isaac (AL09) and Joyce (AL10), respectively. The next system in the Atlantic would normally be AL11, which would usually correspond to AWIPS PILs and WMO headers ending with 1; however, products for Hurricane Florence are already using these AWIPS PILs and WMO headers.

If another TC, potential TC or subtropical cyclone forms in the Atlantic basin before advisory packages are discontinued for Florence, it will have AWIPS PILs and WMO headers ending with 2 and will be numbered AL12.

The AWIPS TC software used by the NWS Weather Forecast Offices assumes a strict relationship between the storm ID and the bin number. If the storm number AL11 was used while advisories are still being written on Hurricane Florence, advisory products for AL11 would be assumed by this software to use the exact same AWIPS PILs and WMO headers as Florence. Given this assumption and possible NWS user software dependencies on the expected relationship between storm number and the AWIPS PIL/WMO header, storm number AL11 will need to be skipped to ensure no conflict with Hurricane Florence advisory products.

If this occurs, NHC will provide an explanation of the issue in the Tropical Cyclone Discussion product for the new storm.

Questions should be directed to:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

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