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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 13-11
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington, DC
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To: Subscribers:
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         -NOAA Weather Wire Service
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Subject: Beach Hazards Statements Issued by WFO Tampa Bay Area
          To Include Information about Harmful Algal Blooms
          (HAB) when appropriate, effective February 4, 2013

Effective Monday, February 4, 2013, at 2 pm Eastern Standard Time
(EST) or 1900 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), harmful algal
bloom (HAB) information provided by NOAA's National Ocean
Service's HAB-Operational Forecast System (HAB-OFS), which meets
the criteria shown below, will be included in the Beach Hazards
Statement being tested by WFO Tampa Bay Area. NOAA's HAB-OFS
provides information on the location, extent, and the potential
for development or movement of harmful algal blooms in the Gulf
of Mexico.

An NWS Beach Hazards Statement will be issued by WFO Tampa Bay
Area for their area of responsibility for a HAB of Karenia brevis
(commonly known as Florida Red Tide) if all of the following
criteria apply:

- NOS' HAB-OFS team has issued a HAB-OFS public conditions report
  or update.

- Karenia brevis concentrations which correlate to respiratory
  impacts (between "low b" and high (>50,000 cells/L)) have been
  confirmed by in-situ cell counts in WFO Tampa Bay Area's area
  of responsibility.

- NOS' HAB-OFS team forecasts moderate or high respiratory
  impacts are possible in the WFO Tampa Bay Area's area of
  responsibility.

- If the level of forecasted respiratory impacts decreases,
  WFO Tampa Bay Area will cancel the Beach Hazards Statement
  for HAB.

A graphic showing WFO Tampa Bay Area's area of responsibility is
online at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/resources/bhs-tbw.pdf

Routine HAB bulletins prepared by NOS' HAB-OFS are issued to
coastal managers once a week, at a minimum, or twice a week
during an active bloom. For more information about HAB-OFS and
the services they provide, refer to:

http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/hab/

The Beach Hazards Statement is issued under the NWS' Coastal
Hazard Message (CFW) with a Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) of BH.S.
The Beach Hazards Statement is being tested by six WFOs, but only
the Beach Hazards Statement issued by WFO Tampa Bay Area will be
incorporating HAB content (when criteria are met) at this time.

Table 1: Communication identifier for the CFW issued by the
WFO Tampa Bay Area for Beach Hazards (BH.S):

Issuing WFO	WMO Header	AWIPS Id
Tampa Bay Area, FL	WHUS42 KTBW	CFWTBW

In addition to HAB impacts, the Beach Hazards Statement issued by
WFO Tampa Bay Area, with the headline of "Beach Hazards Statement
in effect for [timeframe]" will also inform beachgoers and local
authorities of a multitude of hazards including, but not limited to:

-Rip currents or other dangerous currents in the surf zone
-Unusually cold water temperatures
-Potential for lightning along the beach/shoreline
-High heat indices which do not meet advisory criteria
-Unusual surf/wave conditions not meeting advisory criteria

WFO Tampa Bay Area will coordinate with NOS' HAB analysts in the
HAB-OFS program concerning harmful algal blooms and potential
health impacts on coastal areas. The HAB analysts will provide
necessary information for inclusion in the Beach Hazards
Statement issued by WFO Tampa Bay Area for its area of
responsibility. The HAB information will originate from
operational HAB forecast bulletins generated by NOS' HAB-OFS
analysts located within the NOS' Center for Operational
Oceanographic and Products and Services (CO-OPS). An NOS HAB-OFS
point of contact for additional information will be included in
all Beach Hazards Statements which include HAB information.

The Beach Hazards Statement is intended to provide information

for these types of hazards listed above in a single product. Those hazards listed above will not necessarily be included in the Beach Hazards Statements issued by all NWS coastal offices participating in this test. Each office has unique criteria for their area of responsibility and will tailor the contents of the Beach Hazards Statement as appropriate. For example, only WFO Tampa Bay Area is testing the inclusion of HAB information in their Beach Hazards Statement.

Below is a link to an example of the Tampa Bay Area Beach Hazards Statement containing harmful algal bloom information:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/resources/bhs-tbw.pdf

The BH.S VTEC code is operational, i.e., the VTEC line carries the (O) identifier. When in effect, the Beach Hazard information issued by WFO Tampa Bay Area and the other five test offices is highlighted in turquoise on the NWS Watch, Warning, Advisory map:

http://www.weather.gov

Users interested in the Beach Hazards Statement, who have not already installed the code, may need to make the appropriate changes to their systems in order to process the BH.S VTEC code if they have not done so already. No additional changes are necessary.

The test of the new VTEC event code (BH.S) began on May 15, 2012, and will continue until further notice. For information about the other five offices participating in the Beach Hazards Statement test, refer to the original Service Change Notice, issued May 2, 2012:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/scn12-10zone_des-aaa.htm

Users are encouraged to provide feedback by using the brief survey and comment form:

http://weather.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=CHMBHS

General background information on VTEC can be found online at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/vtec

If you have questions or comments please contact:

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NWS Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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