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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 13-32
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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To: Subscribers:
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From: Eli Jacks
Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

Subject: Change to the Federal Information Processing System
(FIPS) Code and the County Form of the Universal
Geographic Code (UGC-C) for the city of Bedford,
VA, Effective July 1, 2013

Effective Monday, July 1 2013, at 0400 AM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), 0900 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Blacksburg (RNK), VA, will implement a change to the Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) code for the city of Bedford, VA. The FIPS code for the Independent city of Bedford (515) will no longer be used; the FIPS code for Bedford County (019) will be used instead. The FIPS code change is required by the change in status of Bedford, VA, from an Independent City to town status. On July 1, 2013, Bedford, VA, will become an incorporated place within Bedford County, VA.

If severe weather is occurring, or forecast to occur, at the scheduled implementation time, an updated Service Change Notice (SCN) will be issued announcing a postponement of this change until Tuesday, July 2, 2013, at 0400 AM EDT, or later if necessary.

The county form of the Universal Geographic Code (UGC-C) is used in some NWS products and the county portion of the NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) code.

The correct county code is critical for receiving watch, warning and follow-up products such as tornado and flash flood watches and warnings. All NWS partners and users and weather radio owners who receive products covering Bedford, VA, and rely on the C form of the UGC code, or the NWR SAME county code, must reprogram their equipment no later than July 1, 2013, to receive the WFO RNK products listed in Table 1. NWS suggests partners and users may want to program the new code (019) before July 1, 2013, and retain the current code (515) in their systems until after July 1. Doing so will make the change transparent on July

1; users will only need to delete the old code (515) after the implementation.

Table 1. WFO RNK Products Affected by the FIPS Code change for Bedford, VA, from independent city to town status:

Product Name:	WMO Heading:	AWIPS ID:
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Tornado Warning	WFUS51 KRNK	TORRNK
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUUS51 KRNK	SVRRNK
Flash Flood Warning	WGUS51 KRNK	FFWRNK
Severe Weather Statement	WWUS51 KRNK	SVSRNK
Flash Flood Statement	WGUS71 KRNK	FFSRNK
Flood Warning	WGUS41 KRNK	FLWRNK
Flood Statement	WGUS81 KRNK	FLSRNK
Watch County Notification	WWUS61 KRNK	WCNRNK
Watch Outline Update	WOUS64 KWNS	WOU#

where # is last digit of the watch number between 0 and 9.

NOAA Weather Radio users in the Bedford area, including all individuals and organizations in the Bedford area (such as media, law enforcement, emergency management and schools) who own a weather radio receiver with NWR SAME capabilities and have programmed in Bedford, VA, as an Independent City, must reprogram their weather radio receivers to continue to receive warnings for Bedford, VA, as part of Bedford County, VA. Instructions on reprogramming your weather radio are in weather radio owner's manuals or available from the manufacturer of your radio, your local retailer, or online at the radio manufacturer's Website.

For your convenience, a list of many weather radio receiver manufacturers is online at:

www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrrcvr.htm

Other sources of information useful to reprogram your weather radio receiver include the WFO Blacksburg home page:

www.erh.noaa.gov/rnk

The NWS NOAA Weather Radio SAME code information page:

www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrsame.htm

A toll-free number provided by the NWS:
1-888-NWR-SAME (1-888-697-7263).

An updated county shapefile depicting Bedford, VA, as part of Bedford County and not as an Independent City is online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/geodata/catalog/county/html/county.htm>

Additional information on this and any future NWS implementations of FIPS code changes is online at:

www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwsfipschg.htm

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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