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Service Change Notice 13-33
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Mark Tew
 Chief, Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch

Subject: Expansion of the Beach Hazards Statement to Ten Additional
Weather Forecast Offices: Effective May 20, 2013

Effective Monday May 20, 2013, at 1200 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), 10 additional NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) will begin testing the Beach Hazards Statement. With the additional offices, a total of 16 WFOs will be testing the Beach Hazards Statement this year (Table 1). For information on last year's test, refer to Service Change Notice 12-10:

https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdfs/scn12-10beach_hazards_aaa.pdf

Last year's Beach Hazard Statement test revealed some limitations with respect to providing information on all beach and surf zone hazards. Therefore, this season participating offices will use one of the two options described below:

Option 1: Repeat last season by using Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) BH.S instead of CF.S (Coastal Flood Statement), LS.S (Lakeshore Flood Statement) and RP.S (Rip Current Statement) VTEC codes.

Option 2: Use VTEC RP.S for rip currents, CF.S for minor coastal flooding, and VTEC BH.S for other beach and surf zone hazards.

There are no new VTEC codes for the test. Users do not need to make any adjustments to their systems. See Tables 2 and 3 for a listing of WFOs and the option they will be testing this season.

Table 1: Communication Identifiers for NWS Offices Testing Beach Hazard Statements, Effective May 20, 2013:

Issuing WFO -----	WMO Header -----	AWIPS ID -----
Newport/Morehead City, NC	WHUS42 KMHX	CFWMHX
Wakefield, VA	WHUS41 KAKQ	CFWAKQ
New Orleans/Baton Rouge, LA	WHUS44 KLIx	CFWLIX
Tampa Bay Area/Ruskin, FL	WHUS42 KTBW	CFWTBW
Miami, FL	WHUS42 KMFL	CFWMFL
Key West, FL	WHUS42 KKEY	CFWKEY
Corpus Christi, TX	WHUS44 KCRP	CFWCRP
Grand Rapids, MI	WHUS43 KGRR	CFWGRR
Marquette, MI	WHUS43 KMQT	CFWMQT
Gaylord, MI	WHUS43 KAPX	CFWAPX
Northern Indiana, IN	WHUS43 KIWX	CFWIWX
Chicago, IL	WHUS43 KLOT	CFWLOT
Seattle, WA	WHUS56 KSEW	CFWSEW
San Francisco Bay Area/Monterey, CA	WHUS46 KMTR	CFWMTR
Los Angeles/Oxnard, CA	WHUS46 KLOX	CFWLOX
San Diego, CA	WHUS46 KSGX	CFWSGX

Table 2: WFOs Testing Option 1 this Season:

Issuing WFO:

Grand Rapids, MI
Marquette, MI
Gaylord, MI
Northern Indiana, IN
Chicago, IL
Seattle, WA
San Francisco Bay Area/Monterey, CA
Los Angeles/Oxnard, CA
San Diego, CA
Newport/Morehead City, NC*
Wakefield, VA*

*WFOs Newport/Morehead City, NC and Wakefield, VA will use the Coastal Flood Statement (VTEC CF.S) for minor flooding and the Beach Hazards Statement (VTEC BH.S) for all other beach and surf zone related hazards, including rip currents. They will not use the Rip Current Statement (VTEC RP.S).

Table 3: WFOs Testing Option 2 this Season:

Issuing WFO:

New Orleans/Baton Rouge, LA
Tampa Bay Area/Ruskin, FL
Miami, FL
Key West, FL
Corpus Christi, TX

Other coastal NWS offices will continue using the CF.S, LS.S, and RP.S codes (in offices where the RP.S code is used). This test of the Beach Hazards Statement will continue until further notice unless significant negative feedback is received.

The Beach Hazard Statement provides beachgoers and local authorities with significant information related to hazards, actual or potential, which do not meet NWS Advisory or Warning criteria. This includes, but are not limited to:

- Dangerous currents in the surf zone.
- Unusual surf/wave conditions not meeting advisory criteria.
- Unusual water temperatures.
- Unusual weather conditions along the beach that do not meet advisory criteria.

Rip Current Statements inform beachgoers of the potential and risk level for rip currents.

Coastal Flood Statements inform beachgoers about minor flooding along the coast that does not meet advisory criteria.

Three NWS offices (Table 4) have collaborated with other agencies to include specific ecological hazards in the Beach Hazards Statement this season.

Table 4: WFOs including information on specific ecological hazards in the BHS this season:

Issuing WFO	Ecological Hazards in BHS
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San Francisco Bay Area/Monterey, CA	Bacteria in water (issued only for dangerous bacteria levels)
Seattle, WA	Tsunami/Marine debris
Tampa Bay Area/Ruskin, FL	Harmful Algal Bloom (Issued only when there is a high risk of respiratory impacts)

Below are links to examples of the BHS issued during the test last season:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/beachhazards/resources/swimming.pdf>
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/beachhazards/resources/shorebreak.pdf>
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/beachhazards/resources/sneaker.pdf>
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/beachhazards/resources/hab.pdf>

On the NWS Watch, Warning, Advisory map (<https://www.weather.gov/>), the Experimental Beach Hazards Statement and Rip Current Statement are highlighted in turquoise and the Coastal Flood Statement is highlighted in olive drab.

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

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

For information on beach hazards safety and awareness, please refer to the Beach Hazards and Safety website at:

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/beachhazards>

General background information on VTEC can be found online at:

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

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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