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Service Change Notice 16-48
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To: Subscribers:
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From: Mark Tew
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Subject: NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) and Emergency Alert System (EAS) Changes for Tropical Cyclone Watch/Warning Services: Effective June 1, 2017

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) added three new Event Codes to the EAS Rules for the 2017 hurricane season:

- Extreme Wind Warning
- Storm Surge Watch
- Storm Surge Warning.

These additions will result in service delivery changes for NWR and the EAS.

Extreme Wind Warning, Event Code EWW: The Extreme Wind Warning is an existing operational warning issued for advance notice of sustained surface wind speeds of 115 miles per hour or greater in association with major hurricanes. Extreme Wind Warnings are issued by Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) serving the Gulf and East coasts, WFO San Juan, and the following inland WFOs: Albany (NY), Atlanta, Birmingham, Blacksburg, Columbia, Fort Worth, Greenville-Spartanburg, Jackson (MS), Raleigh, San Antonio and Shreveport. For the remainder of the 2016 hurricane season, the event code assigned to the Extreme Wind Warning will be TOR. Beginning with the 2017 hurricane season, the new event assigned to the Extreme Wind Warning will be EWW. There will be no changes to the current Tornado Warning Event Code, TOR.

A Storm Surge Watch/Warning is currently under development by the NWS, planned for operational use in 2017. The operational implementation of the Storm Surge Watch/Warning will be announced at a later date through a separate Service Change Notice (SCN) once the public comment period ends and comprehensive testing is completed.

Storm Surge Watch, Event Code SSA: For the U.S. Gulf and East coasts, WFOs may issue the Storm Surge Watch for the possibility of life-threatening inundation for rising water moving inland, generally within 48 hours, associated with a tropical, subtropical or post-tropical cyclone. NWS may issue this watch earlier when conditions, such as tropical-storm force

winds, could reduce the time available for protective actions, such as evacuations. NWS may also issue a watch for locations not expected to receive life-threatening inundation but could potentially be isolated by inundation in adjacent areas.

Storm Surge Warning, Event Code SSW: For the Gulf and East coasts, WFOs may issue the Storm Surge Warning to provide advance notice of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland, generally within 36 hours, associated with a tropical, subtropical or post-tropical cyclone. NWS may issue a warning when other conditions, such as the onset of tropical storm-force winds, are expected to reduce the time available to take protective actions such as evacuations. NWS may also issue a warning for locations not expected to receive life-threatening inundation but could potentially be isolated by inundation in adjacent areas.

Service Changes for the NWR User Community:

For the balance of the 2016 hurricane season, the Extreme Wind Warning will be broadcast over NWR. For receivers providing a limited, caption-like message display, "TORNADO WARNING" will show on the receiver. Receivers equipped with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) will activate with SAME alarm tones. Receivers equipped with the 1050 Hertz (Hz) Warning Alarm Tone (WAT) will activate.

For the 2017 hurricane season, the Extreme Wind Warning will continue to be broadcast over NWR. Those receivers providing a limited, caption-like message display will likely show wording such as "UNKNOWN WATCH" or "UNKNOWN WARNING". Receivers equipped with SAME should activate with the SAME alarm tones. Receivers equipped with the 1050 Hz WAT should activate for this alert.

For the 2017 hurricane season, Storm Surge Watches may be broadcast over NWR. Those receivers providing a limited, caption-like message display will likely show wording such as "UNKNOWN WATCH" or "UNKNOWN WARNING". Receivers equipped with SAME should activate with the SAME alarm tones. The 1050 Hz WAT will not be used with the Storm Surge Watch.

Service Changes for the EAS:

For the remainder of the 2016 hurricane season, WFOs will request EAS activation for the Extreme Wind Warning using the Tornado event code, TOR. Beginning with the 2017 hurricane season, NWS will request an EAS activation using the EWW event code.

Pending operational decisions for the 2017 hurricane season, the NWS may request EAS activation for the Storm Surge Warning. In most jurisdictions, the NWS will not request EAS activation for the Storm Surge Watch.

Local WFOs are now reaching out to their State and Local Emergency Communications Committees, state emergency management agencies and broadcasters' associations to assist with implementing the new EAS event codes. To keep you updated about new EAS services planned for your area, your local WFO may issue Public Information Statements, update WFO

webpages and air Public Service Announcements over NWR.

A list of frequently asked policy questions concerning these new NWR and EAS event codes and services is provided online at:

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/easfaq/>

More details on the NWR program are online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr>

More details on the EAS are online at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/info/eas_description.html

A Weather-Ready Nation information sheet (Important NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and Emergency Alert System Changes) summarizing these changes is posted online at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hurricane/resources/Tropical_EASWRN_092816.pdf

More details about the provision of other new storm surge information services for 2017 (new national Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) product; changes to the WFO VTEC product; new Tropical Cyclone Storm Surge Watch/Warning graphic; Wireless Emergency Alert changes; etc.) will be provided in future SCNs.

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