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Public Information Statement 20-26  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
730 AM EDT Wed Apr 22 2020

To:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
              -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network  
              -NOAAPort  
              Other NWS partners and employees

From:         Michelle Hawkins, Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject:      Soliciting Comments on Proposed Changes to Wireless Emergency  
              Alert (WEA) Wording for Snow Squall Warnings until  
              July 1, 2020

The NWS is requesting comments on proposed changes to Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) wording for Snow Squall Warnings (SQW) until July 1, 2020. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule changes allow for the expansion of WEA from the existing maximum of 90 characters to a maximum of 360 characters.

NWS is soliciting feedback through July 1 2020 on both the proposed expansion of Snow Squall Warnings to use the new 360 character maximum and the proposed content of the NWS Snow Squall Warning messages in English and Spanish carried by WEA. The planned implementation of these proposed messages will be completed at a future date to be determined.

The NWS will provide messages to WEA for hazards believed to be life-threatening and that have consequences that can be mitigated or minimized by immediate action.

For more detailed information on NWS WEA messages, please refer to Service Change Notice 19-43:  
[https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/scn19-43wea\\_360aac.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/scn19-43wea_360aac.pdf)

The expansion of WEA messages up to 360 characters allows the NWS to provide wireless users with more detailed and actionable information. The expansion of the message length will significantly increase the amount of information conveyed about a hazard during an emergency to the message recipient. The inclusion of Spanish messages will also expand the reach of NWS messaging to an audience that has been underserved by NWS WEA messaging in the past.

The provision of NWS 90 character WEA messages will continue until further notice. While public notification is not anticipated every time a modification is made to the general format of WEA messages,

public comment is currently being solicited on the initial format and contents of the 360 character Snow Squall Warning messages in English and Spanish proposed for implementation. The language proposed for these messages is as follows:

English Message

National Weather Service: Snow Squall Warning until hh:mm tzT ddd. Slow down or delay travel! Be ready for a sudden drop to near zero visibility and icy roads in heavy snow.

Spanish Message

Servicio Nacional de Meteorología: Aviso de Turbonada de Nieve hasta las hh:mm PM tzT. Reduzca la velocidad o retrase su viaje! Prepárese para una caída repentina de visibilidad cercana a cero y carreteras heladas en nevadas fuertes.

More information about the proposed changes to WEA Messages for SQWs can be found in the Product Description Document (PDD) linked below: [https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD\\_Proposed\\_WEA\\_SnowSquallWarnings\\_2020.pdf](https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD_Proposed_WEA_SnowSquallWarnings_2020.pdf)

The NWS is accepting comments through July 1, 2020 on the proposed changes to WEAs Messages for SQWs. Comments may be provided via a survey at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ProposedWEASnowSquallWarnings>

Or via email to:

[Michael.Muccilli@noaa.gov](mailto:Michael.Muccilli@noaa.gov)

A Service Change Notice will be sent after reviewing feedback and finalizing the date of this implementation.

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

Michael Muccilli  
National Weather Service Headquarters  
Silver Spring, MD  
Email: [Michael.Muccilli@noaa.gov](mailto:Michael.Muccilli@noaa.gov)

National Public Information Statements are available at:

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

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