

Guidelines for writing Notifications

Notifications require very specific formatting for consistency and compatibility with dissemination systems.

Basic formatting requirements:

Letter size (8.5 X 11), portrait orientation.

Margins: 1 inch (top/left/right/bottom)

Font: Courier New, 12 point only.

No before/after paragraph spacing. Use single line only.

No images or graphics.

No Tables. No Text color (only black)

No Tabs or indents. (use spaces instead)

No text formatting (bold, underline, italic, superscript, etc.)

No Bullets, No Autonumbering, or bulleted lists.

No special character like $\frac{1}{2}$, 32°, trademark™

Common Pitfall: Starting a list with 1. or a. or - and the system auto indents; indents are not allowed.

To prevent this:

In **Google Docs:** select Tools, Preferences, and uncheck "Automatically detect lists"

In **Word:** select File, Options (may need to click on More.. to see it), Proofing, Autocorrect options, then uncheck "Automatic bulleted lists and Automatic numbered lists."

Rules when using Links:

Double check each and every link to ensure they are correct.

The notifications are sent out as TEXT through the dissemination systems, and posted on the website as a pdf document. The text message does not transmit embedded hyperlinks.

Good Examples:

...Radar viewer at: <https://radar.weather.gov/>

...Radar viewer at: <https://radar.weather.gov/> (with embedded hyperlink)

The second example works because even though the embedded hyperlink will not be transmitted in the TEXT message, the full URL is still there as text.

Bad Example: ...click on the [Radar Viewer](#) ...

In this example, the TEXT message will NOT show or transmit the embedded hyperlink. It will be transmitted as: ...click on the Radar Viewer ... and no link is provided.

EXAMPLE Service Change Notice

Note: Items in **Blue** text are entered by the National Notification Manager prior to issuance/posting. Blue text is not allowed in the actual notification, it is used here only to identify specific text/sections completed by the Notification Manager.

NOUS41 KWBC DDHHMM
PNSWSH

This header, and To: text never changes. PNSWSH is used for both SCNs and PNS

Service Change Notice XX-XX
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
XXXX xM ExT day mmm dd yyyy

This address never changes.

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

From: Carlos Diaz, Notification Manager
 Service Advancement Division
 Office of Future Readiness

Subect line must have Effective date, or "Effective Immediately"

Subject: Changes to Example Fictional Product Effective December 31, 2026.

Beginning on or about December 31, 2026, at 1200 Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), the Nosuch Weather Center will implement the following changes to the Example Fictional Product:

1. Product will be issued at four hour intervals instead of six.
2. Change the valid time from 2 hours to 1 hour.

Here we can add more details to this fictional example, such as text describing the before and after changes.

For questions regarding this change, please contact:

John Q. Smith
Chief, Operations Division
Nosuch Weather Center
john.smith@noaa.gov

All SCNs include this at the end.

National Service Change Notices are online at:
<https://www.weather.gov/notifcation>

NNNN