

SUNCOAST OBSERVER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the National Weather Service Tampa Bay Area, FL

www.weather.gov/tampa

3.25.2022

Top stories in this newsletter



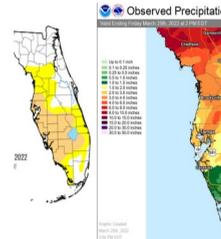
CoCoRaHS: Weather Enthusiasts Wanted!



WFO Tampa Bay Area Receives Unsung Hero Award



Keeping up with the Latest in Tropical Operations, Virtually



Have the Recent Rains Helped with the Current Drought?

CoCoRaHS: Weather Enthusiasts Wanted!



By: Austen Flannery

Do you ever wonder how much rainfall you received from a recent thunderstorm? If so, a volunteer weather observing program needs your help! The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow network, or CoCoRaHS, is looking for new volunteers across the state of Florida. This grassroots effort is part of a growing national network of home-based and amateur rain spotters with a goal of providing a high density precipitation network that will supplement existing observations.

Given the variable pattern of rainfall over Florida, it's important to understand just how much rain fell in a particular area. How many times have you heard the rainfall report on TV, radio or social media from an official observation and thought to yourself, "That's not what I got?!?". This is your chance to help! By providing your daily precipitation data, you're not only helping National Weather Service meteorologists. You're helping agricultural interests, forestry officials, water management employees, and emergency-management personnel.

Volunteers may obtain an official rain gauge through the CoCoRaHS website www.cocorahs.org for about \$30 plus shipping. In addition to the 4 inch plastic rain gauge, volunteers are required to take a short online training module and then can use the CoCoRaHS website or mobile app to submit their daily reports (preferably around 7:00 AM EST). Observations are immediately available on maps and reports for the public to view. The process takes less than five minutes a day, but the impact to the community is tenfold: By providing high quality, accurate measurements, the observers are able to supplement existing networks and provide useful results to the National Weather Service, other scientists, resource managers, decision makers and other users.

WFO Tampa Bay Area Receives Unsung Hero Award

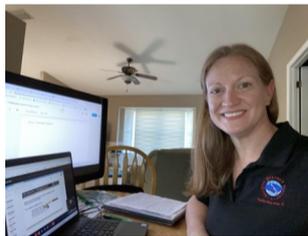


By: Dan Noah

WFO Tampa Bay Area was the recipient of the 2022 Unsung Hero Award from the Tampa Bay Propeller Club at the 16th Annual Maritime Industry Night. The award was in recognition for the dedicated weather services provided to support public safety. Brian LaMarre, Meteorologist-in-Charge of the Tampa Bay Office, said, "Our NWS office has a long and proud relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg and Port Tampa Bay. We actively participate in Port committees and briefings to promote weather awareness and safety. Our office is humbled by this prestigious recognition from the Propeller Club, Port of Tampa".

Photograph from left to right: Mark Valenti, Past President Propeller Club, Brian LaMarre, NWS Meteorologist-in-Charge, Christopher Chambers, President Propeller Club, and Stephen Shiveley, NWS Meteorologist.

Keeping up with the Latest in Tropical Operations, Virtually



By: Jen Hubbard

It may be the start of spring, but we're already gearing up for tropical season within the National Weather Service. The first week of spring, NWS Tampa Bay's own Jen Hubbard served as one of the facilitators/trainers for an intensive Virtual Tropical Operations Training course, leading 30 lead and general forecasters from as far north as NY and VT, to as far south as Miami, FL, as far east as Puerto Rico, and as far west as Texas. This is a mix of forecasters from both coastal and inland offices, because as we've seen in recent years, hurricane impacts can extend well away from the coast. The week-long training session takes an intensive look into each of the main weather impacts seen during tropical systems as well as the operational grids and products required for all of those impacts, and the coordination and tie-ins with national centers information into the local products.

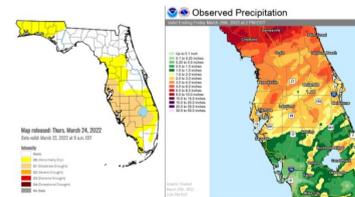
Just like us, it's never too early to start preparing for hurricane season. Now's the time, while the weather is nice, to make a plan for you and your family. Some considerations are:

1. Will you need to evacuate? Check your local county emergency management site or <https://www.floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone/> to find out if your home is in an evacuation zone and which one if so.
2. If you are in an evacuation zone, where would you go if you were told to do so from your local emergency management office? A friend or family member's house that lives outside the evacuation zone or a local inland hotel? Remember that when an evacuation order is issued, that doesn't mean that you need to evacuate hundreds of miles away to completely get out of the path of the storm. Those evacuation orders are to remove people out of the way of the storm surge threat area and/or out of homes that are not made to withstand the expected winds, such as mobile homes.
3. What should you include in your Preparedness Kit? <https://www.ready.gov/kit> is a great resource to help you build yours. And remember that you do not necessarily need to buy all of these supplies at once. Take advantage of BOGO sales and store the extra one in your kit. Add one item to your normal shopping routine over the course of the next few months if your budget allows.

Here are the 2022 Names for your familiarization:

Alex	Gaston	Lisa	Richard
Bonnie	Hermine	Martin	Shary
Colin	Ian	Nicole	Tobias
Danielle	Julia	Owen	Virginie
Earl	Karl	Paula	Walter
Fiona			

Have the Recent Rains Helped with the Current Drought?



By: Jen Hubbard

The short answer is, for some areas yes, and for other areas, no. As you can see from the rainfall map on the right side of the accompanying picture, the greatest accumulations of rainfall over the last 14 days (Middle of March) were over the northern half of the forecast area, with much of the Nature Coast seeing 3-6 inches. This is where it has helped somewhat. Levy, Citrus, Sumter, and Hernando Counties were previously in the D1: Moderate Drought category, but are now (as of

March 24th) in the D0: Abnormally Dry category. Eastern Polk County has also seen a bit of improvement. The rest of the forecast area however remain in the D1: Moderate Drought category, with the majority of the area seeing less than 1.5 inches from the recent storm systems.

Even with a few areas seeing some improvement, this does not mean that they are out of the drought conditions, and a short dry spell will likely return those areas to their previous designation. Our local dry season continues through around early June, when our summer thunderstorms start to become a regular occurrence. Until then, be sure to limit water usage as much as possible both indoors and outdoors, and be sure to practice fire safety when camping or enjoying the outdoors. For the latest details visit our local Drought/Rainfall page at <https://www.weather.gov/tbw/droughtinfo>