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Public Information Statement 21-59
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
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From: Michelle Hawkins, Chief
 Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Soliciting Comments until October 15, 2021 on the Proposed Use of Impact-Based Warning Tags for Snow Squall Warnings and Proposed Changes to Wireless Emergency Alerts for Snow Squall Warnings

The National Weather Service (NWS) is requesting comments on the proposed use of Impact-based Warning (IBW) tags for Snow Squall Warnings and proposed changes to Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) for Snow Squall Warnings until October 15, 2021.

The IBW format is a consistent, bulleted product format that provides easily readable information describing the hazard (snow squalls), the source of the information (e.g., radar indicated, trained spotter observed), and a brief description of the impact of the hazard. Snow Squall Warnings currently employ the use of IBW format. The NWS is proposing appending additional machine-readable tags to characterize the snow squall impact and source information. In turn, characterization of the snow squall impact will allow NWS to issue WEA for only those warnings with "Significant" tags.

The characterization of the snow squall impact and source information, along with examples of the proposed IBW tags for Snow Squall Warnings, are contained in the Product Description Document (PDD) at the link below:

https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD_Proposed_IBWTagsforSnowSquallWarnings_2021.pdf

There will be no change to the information included in the Snow Squall Warning segment header block, including the Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) strings, nor will there be a change to the criteria for warning dissemination through other systems (e.g., NOAA Weather Radio).

WEA is a joint effort between the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the wireless industry that allows emergency alerting authorities to geographically target emergency messages to mobile devices, primarily cell phones. The NWS provides messages to WEA for hazards believed to be life-threatening and that have consequences that can be mitigated or minimized by immediate action. More information about WEA can be found at:

<https://www.weather.gov/wrn/wea>

The NWS is accepting comments through October 15, 2021 on these proposed changes. Comments may be provided via a survey at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PropIBWTagsforSnowSquallWarnings2021>

Or via email to:

michael.muccilli@noaa.gov

Based on feedback received, NWS may implement these proposals in 2022.

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

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

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

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