



Aware

Aware is published by NOAA's National Weather Service to enhance communications between NWS and the Emergency Management Community and other government and Private Sector Partners.

November 2013

New and Improved

Spotlight on Severe Tornadoes and Flash Floods

Ed Clark, Hydrologist, NWS Hydrologic Services Division

Starting February 4, 2014, NWS forecast offices will have the option to add the phrase "TORNADO EMERGENCY" to a headline in a Tornado Warning (TOR) and "FLASH FLOOD EMERGENCY" in a Flash Flood Warning (FFW). The headlines will only be used when ALL the criteria below are met for an event:

- ◆ Severe threat to human life is imminent or ongoing
- ◆ Catastrophic property damage is imminent or ongoing
- ◆ Reliable sources confirm a tornado or flash flood

These headlines will spotlight the potential for large scale loss of life and catastrophic property damage in these extreme tornado and flash flood events. The headline will be on a separate line directly following the date/time line and before the first line that begins "THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN [WFO NAME] HAS ISSUED A..." The headline will be preceded and followed by ellipsis:

...TORNADO EMERGENCY FOR MOORE AND SOUTH OKLAHOMA CITY...
or

...FLASH FLOOD EMERGENCY FOR CENTRAL KENT COUNTY...

These new headlines will duplicate, not replace, "TORNADO EMERGENCY" or "FLASH FLOOD EMERGENCY" in the last line of the third bullet, the

statement of the warning.

This change does not impact the Severe Weather Statement (SVS) or Flash Flood Statement (FFS) that allow headlines for tornado and flash flood emergencies.

A more detailed description and examples of a [Tornado Warning and a Flash Flood Warning](#) that include the new headline are online.

Blizzards and Ice Storms Removed from WEA

Mike Gerber, NWS Dissemination Services Meteorologist

On November 13, 2013, NWS removed Blizzard and Ice Storm Warnings from the list of NWS warning types which activate [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) by default. NWS will continue to broadcast Blizzard and Ice Storm Warnings over its other dissemination services.

On June 28, 2012, NWS began sending its most critical warnings to the FEMA [Integrated Public Alert and Warning System \(IPAWS\)](#) for broadcast on WEA-capable cell phones. Since then, NWS has been collecting public feedback and using that feedback to refine the list of NWS warning types that activate WEA.

NWS makes determinations about WEA activation by factoring in urgency, severity and certainty of the warnings types; on geo-targeting and on the current capabilities of WEA-capable cell phones. Although blizzards and ice storms are high impact events, there was significant

feedback that NWS Blizzard and Ice Storm Warning offer too much advance notice to warrant WEA activation. WEA messages will continue for the following warnings:

- ◆ Tornadoes
- ◆ Flash Flood
- ◆ Hurricane and Typhoon
- ◆ Extreme Wind
- ◆ Dust Storm



NWS is developing capabilities to activate WEA for weather and hydrologic events based on the expected event impact rather than by warning type alone.

All major wireless carriers and hundreds of smaller carriers voluntarily send their users WEA messages. To find out if your phone is WEA-capable or if you have other questions related to the receipt of WEA on your cell phone, please contact your wireless carrier or check the [WEA website](#).

Decision Support

NWS Great Lakes Offices Expand Marine Outreach

NWS News Staff, Silver Spring, MD

Protecting lives and livelihoods on the Great Lakes was one of the first goals for the fledgling weather warning service in 1870. Marine forecast services continue to be a



NWS Chicago Forecaster Stephen Rodriguez stands in front of the 1000-foot Burns Harbor after meeting with the captain and mates

key component of the NWS mission to protect life and property and enhance the national economy.

To ensure that NWS effectively supports this mission, the five NWS forecast offices that issue open-waters forecasts for the Great Lakes ([Chicago](#), [Marquette](#), [Detroit](#), [Cleveland](#), and [Buffalo](#)), together with NWS Central Region and national headquarters, have initiated a new Great Lakes outreach effort.

The program’s goal is to improve decision support services for mariners on the Great Lakes by better understanding their weather information needs and the environment in which they operate.

Staff members from the five offices are meeting with officers aboard freighters, tug boats, Coast Guard vessels and other craft that rely on NWS forecasts to determine which weather elements are most critical in decision making, how these products are interpreted, the perception of how well various situations are handled, and proposals for evolving marine services. This direct contact will also help strengthen the relationship between captains and local offices.

NWS offices will review the information collected from these visits to identify common themes and issues. Based on the results, the offices will work together to improve marine products and

services across the Great Lakes. Any proposed new/enhanced products or services will be open for public comment/review prior to operational implementation.

NWS is also collaborating with [Environment Canada](#) to develop a common suite of services between the two agencies. The next step is to expand this outreach effort to offices which forecast for the near shore waters to gain a better perspective on the needs of recreational boaters.

Improving decision support for those in the Great Lakes who rely on NWS products and services benefits those individuals and groups directly, and it is another step in NWS’s efforts to build a Weather-Ready Nation.

Outreach Insights

Floods Happen. Lessen the Loss/Flood Safety Workbooks Now Available

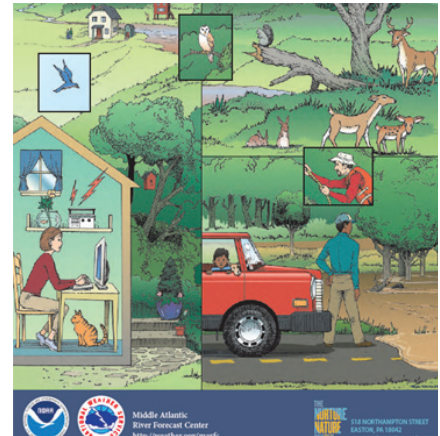
Patti Wnek, NWS Service Coordination Hydrologist, Middle Atlantic RFC

The Nurture Nature Center, a non-profit organization in Easton, PA, has just released a new flood safety workbook. “Floods Happen. Lessen the Loss” is a coloring work-

book that offers flood education and awareness. The workbook was created after multiple major floods in the Delaware River basin. These horrific events left residents shocked and in disbelief that this could ever happen again.

The workbook explains that severe floods will continue to happen, that residents should expect it, and that floods are part of the natural order. The workbook also provides tips on what to do to reduce losses from flooding. The key messages are:

- ◆ Get alerts
- ◆ Go to higher ground
- ◆ Don’t drive into flood waters
- ◆ Make a plan



“Floods Happen. Lessen the Loss” is a coloring workbook that offers flood education and awareness.

Each one of these educational messages is taught in the workbook through different activities such as mazes, word finds, crossword puzzles and more.

They feature the characters, “High Water Mark” and his dog “Noah.” Each message also has a full page illustration to color. Once all 6 pages are colored, kids can connect the pages to create their own flood safety poster.

The workbook was made possible through a NOAA Grant. You can download and print the workbook with your organization’s name, logo

and website address and distribute them to schools and youth groups in your community. The workbook make a terrific flood safety outreach activity.

For more information and assistance, contact Rachel Hogan Carr, Director of the Nurture Nature Center at RHogan@nurturenature.org or call 610-253-4432.

Turn Around Don't Drown Trademark Renewed on 10th Anniversary

Katie Collins Garrett, Outreach, Training and Interagency Coordinator, Hydrologic Services Branch

Flooding remains one of the top weather killers with the average number of annual fatalities totaling near 90. More than half of these fatalities are vehicle related. The NWS "Turn Around Don't Drown" (TADD) campaign is dedicated to teaching the public about flood safety.



WCM Hector Guerrero shows a Turn Around Don't Drown sign

In the early 2000s, Hector Guerrero, the Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the NWS San Angelo, TX, began formulating a plan

for a program to raise awareness of the dangers of driving or walking into flooded areas.

Hector's concern about flood safety began as a meteorologist at the NWS Brownsville, TX, office. While there, he became concerned when hurricane evacuees from the Texas coast had to relocate to the heart of Texas' Flash Flood Alley.

Having grown up in Austin, TX, part of Flash Flood Alley, he was also aware of the dangers associated with flash floods. "I wanted a catchy phrase along the lines of the fire-safety mantra: "Stop, Drop and Roll." After brainstorming with a group of firefighters from Harlingen, TX, I chose 'Turn Around Don't Drown.'"

Hector worked with a team from NWS Southern Region Headquarters, and together they partnered with the Texas Division of Emergency Management, The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes, and the Fort Worth Fire Department. The TADD program was launched in Texas in 2003.

Once NOAA trademarked the phrase, the program made its national debut in 2004.

Since then, officials have placed hundreds of permanent TADD signs along roadways prone to flooding across the country. The slogan has become an often repeated catchphrase in the media, classrooms and even homes. In addition to the education materials developed by NWS, our partners also distribute resources promoting this safety message.

The 10th Anniversary of the national campaign will be highlighted during Flood Safety Awareness Week, March 16-22, 2014.

For more information about the national TADD program, visit the [TADD Website](#) or contact [Katie Collins Garrett](#).

Video Brings Home Flash Flood Safety

Mike Cantin, WCM, NWS Honolulu, HI

Getting the public to take flooding seriously can be challenging. NWS Honolulu recently produced a Hawaii-specific [flood safety video](#) to help bring the dangers home. Forecaster Tony Reynes wrote, directed and filmed the movie which has been getting praise from local media and emergency managers. Much of the video's footage was the product of collaboration with emergency managers and other county officials from around Hawaii. The video is featured prominently on NWS Honolulu's YouTube and Facebook pages.



A new flash flood video includes dramatic footage of local floods visualizes the impacts of flooding.

Future plans include videos highlighting ocean safety and tropical weather. This project represents an important collaboration between the Honolulu Forecast Office and core partners around Hawaii.

Aware

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