



# 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.

December 2020

---

## Should NWS Expand its Role in Sending Non-Weather Emergency Messages?

By [Tim Schott](#), Meteorologist, AFS Dissemination Mission Support Team

The NWS is accepting comments on a [proposal to add polygons to Non-Weather Emergency Messages \(NWEM\)](#) disseminated via World Meteorological Organization (WMO) text products when polygons are provided by civil alerting authorities. Examples of NWEMs include the Civil Emergency Message and Shelter In Place Warning.

This change would be the first step towards a long term plan for reducing the geographical overalerting of NWEMs disseminated by NWS. This should help the many downstream service providers who process NWS products for further dissemination to their customers.

If you have comments or questions, please feel free to contact [Tim Schott](#), NWS Dissemination Services.

---

## Coordinated Winter Weather Awareness Week Campaign Taps Partner Strengths

By Meteorologists [John Banghoff](#) and [Rachel Gutierrez](#) NWS State College, PA

In a large, weather diverse state, coordination is key for weather safety. For the third year in a row, NWS State College, PA, facilitated a statewide unified campaign for Winter Weather Awareness Week (WWAW) in coordination with key partners. Winter weather hazards in the Keystone State are wide-ranging and provide a unique opportunity to coordinate with partner agencies such as the state Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), Turnpike Commission, and Police (PSP).

NWS State College coordinated an effort to design educational posts to better prepare the public for winter hazards. Staff created graphical content to catch the public's eye, increase public awareness of winter hazards after a record mild winter last year, and set the tone for unified messaging among state and federal partners. Partner agencies created their own content and various agencies helped amplify content. NWS offices in Pittsburgh, PA, and Binghamton, NY, also posted content as part of the coordinated social media plan.



Throughout the week, daily topics provided a framework for a variety of content. This content included how to make an emergency kit for your car, NWS winter weather product definitions, winter weather vocabulary, snow squall information, the science of different precipitation types, how to access traffic information, reporting winter precipitation, winter flooding, and how to stay safe during cold weather.

A big part of the coordinated effort was a unified banner for graphics with all partner logos and use of the hashtag #WinterPrepPA in all posts. The hashtag provides an ability for partner agencies and the NWS to reference back to WWAW posts throughout the winter and, as necessary, retweet or share content before a future winter event. This functionality may prove especially useful this year because our awareness week featured a stretch of record warmth and bright sunshine in the Commonwealth, a far cry from winter weather conditions now impacting the state.

Throughout the process of designing and implementing the coordinated winter campaign, our mission was to create a Weather-Ready Pennsylvania prepared for the variety of winter events. We look forward to continuing these efforts throughout the 2020-21 winter season and appreciate the efforts of PEMA, PennDOT, PA Turnpike, and PSP to help with this campaign!

---

## NOAA/NWS Partner with Jackson State University to Host Anniversary Conference

By [John Moore, III](#), Meteorologist, NWS Jackson, MS

In celebration of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Jackson State University's (JSU) Meteorology Program, members of NOAA and the NWS partnered with JSU to host a virtual conference in October 28–30. The conference exposed middle school, high school, and college students to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) opportunities as well as celebrating the rich legacy of JSU's meteorology program.

The first day of the conference was "STEM Immersion Day." More than 1,000 middle and high school students across numerous states and countries joined virtual STEM experiments designed by JSU's College of Science, Engineering and Technology. Virtual experiments included:

- ◆ Dissecting a pig
- ◆ Making oobleck slime
- ◆ Coding computers
- ◆ Creating a weather forecast and more

JSU planned STEM Immersion Day with help from NWS Jackson Observing Program Leader Latrice Maxie and NWS Jackson Meteorologist Janae Elkins, along with Dr. Andrea Sealy of the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology.

The program's second day featured professional development for undergraduate atmospheric science students. NWS Senior Physical Scientist Dr. James Sims moderated the first session, which included presentations on topics such as "Building a Federal Government Resume," and what to say during "The Elevator Speech."

The second session was a panel discussion featuring young meteorologists across the country. This session, entitled "You've Graduated, Now What?" featured NWS Jackson Meteorologist Janae Elkins, NWS Cheyenne Meteorologist Ayesha Wilkinson, NWS Management and Program Analyst Isha Renta, NWS Shreveport Meteorologist Davyon Hill, and WDTV in Weston, WV Jordan Darenbourg. The final professional development session focused on non-traditional careers in meteorology. NWS Cleveland



Warning Coordination Meteorologist Freddie Zeigler planned and moderated this session.

The conference also celebrated JSU's 45 years of leading diversity in meteorology. Speakers included Deputy NOAA Administrator RDML Tim Galludet, Ph.D. On the last day, attendees could take part in a Virtual Career Fair broken into three sessions:

- ◆ Broadcast/Media Careers, led by NWS Jackson Meteorologist John Moore
- ◆ Graduate School/Academia session featuring presentations from 15 different meteorology and emergency management graduate schools and other programs.
- ◆ Government/Public Careers, hosted by NWS Jackson Meteorologist in Charge Bill Parker. The session included federal agencies with job opportunities in meteorology. NWS Jackson, MS, WCM Felecia Bowser co-presented the NWS session.

NOAA and the NWS have played a vital role in the success of the JSU Meteorology Program through its 45 year history. NWS forecasters have taught classes and mentored students from the program's infancy. Today, over one-third of the African American meteorologists in the NWS are graduates of Jackson State. This conference was chaired by NWS scientists John Moore and James Sims.

---

## NWS Heat Workshop: Envisioning an NWS National Heat Program

By [Danielle Nagele](#), Meteorologist, NWS Public Weather Program Coordinator.

In November 2020, the NWS Public Weather Program hosted a Heat Workshop that brought together NWS representatives at the national, regional, and local levels alongside key partners and stakeholders.

The workshop objectives included documenting the current use of heat-related tools, better understanding partner perspectives, and defining gaps and opportunities for future NWS heat products, services and messaging.

The workshop began with a brief overview of NWS current and experimental heat tools such as Wet Bulb Globe Temperature ([WBGT](#)) and [HeatRisk](#). Next, the National Integrated Heat Health Information System ([NIHHIS](#)) led a panel discussion focusing on needs at the federal and international level to address heat health concerns. Panel presenters

included experts from Centers for Disease Control, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institutes of Health, and Environment and Climate Change Canada. Later in the afternoon, a group of meteorologists from NWS Weather Forecast Offices from across the country presented heat case studies alongside their partners. These NWS forecasters focused on a variety of unique situations including forecasting and responding to heat during hurricane recovery.

The meeting fostered important discussions on the current use of NWS heat tools, best practices for coordination between NWS and its partners, and potential avenues for future collaboration across agencies. Insights from this workshop will inform a NWS comprehensive heat strategy currently under development.



You can learn more about NWS heat efforts on the [NWS heat safety website](#). For questions on the NWS heat program, contact [Kimberly McMahon](#), Public Weather Program Lead or [Danielle Nagele](#), Public Weather Program Coordinator.

---

## Remembering the Edmund Fitzgerald with WFO Marquette

By [Joe Phillips](#), Meteorologist, NWS Marquette, MI

November 6, 2020, marked the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald. All 29 crew members were lost just northwest of Whitefish Point, MI, in Lake Superior. Of the more than 6,000 ships that have found their graves under the often icy waters of the Great Lakes, the Fitzgerald is still the largest ever to sink.

To help commemorate this anniversary, NWS Marquette, MI, staff members updated their legacy webpage by evolving it into a sophisticated [story map](#).

This project was enhanced by contribution from a Great Lakes historian and two local maritime museums. The story map walks users through a brief history of the vessel and the final voyage from the perspective of the U.S. Coast Guard marine casualty report and storm report before focusing on other notable fall storms. The story map also includes information about NWS Marquette weather forecasting and marine products and services.

The team was comprised of Ryan Connelly, Linda Gilbert, Jacob Horton, Joe Phillips (Team Leader), and Jacki Ritzman. The new story map can be found [here](#).



**Aware**

NOAA's National Weather Service, Analyze, Forecast and Support Office  
Managing Editor: [Melody Magnus](#)  
Editors: **Mark Tew, Doug Hilderbrand, Wendy Levine**  
Aware online: [www.weather.gov/publications/aware](http://www.weather.gov/publications/aware) | ISSN 1936-8178  
Subscribe/Unsubscribe: <https://nws.weather.gov/products/Mail/list.php?id=2>