



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.

October 2020

Nationwide Launch of NWS Core Partner Survey

The NWS Evolve Program Management Office (PMO) Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS) Measurements Initiative Team is excited to announce a nationwide test of the NWS Core Partner Survey. When NWS receives feedback from the questionnaire, each office, and our agency as a whole, can improve and enhance IDSS. NWS can help better build a Weather-Ready Nation through improved IDSS in our communities. Plans are in the works to include National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) partners in future surveys.

The surveys consists of two questionnaires. These two components address IDSS partnership, each with a different dissemination strategy.

NWS launched the first survey in August 2020 explicitly targeting event-specific IDSS. In that survey, we want to capture NWS performance to core partners shortly after providing IDSS for a storm or planned event, such as the Superbowl. This questionnaire asks about accessibility, comprehension, consistency, decision-making and timeliness.

Starting in November 2020, NWS plans to release the second survey. This survey includes "Trust Index" questions to assess NWS IDSS as a whole.

Thanks to the IDSS Measurements Initiative Team that helped to develop this survey. The team includes representatives from NCEP, offices in all six NWS regions, national headquarters. The team and all of Evolve PMO thankful all of our local partners in the field who have made this initiative possible. For further information or questions, please contact Vankita.Brown@noaa.gov, Cindy.Woods@noaa.gov, or Mike.Sowko@noaa.gov.



NWS Core Partners, such as Emergency Managers and other local government officials are vital to our mission to protect lives and property.

NWS Redesigns Radar Web Page with EMs Needs in Mind

By [Maureen O'Leary](#), NWS Public Affairs, Silver Spring, MD

Significant improvements are coming to the NWS web page to view weather radar data. Our new interactive radar viewer and expanded radar services will provide EMs with more information about storms in your area. The new web page will deliver the nation's NEXRAD network in a more flexible geographic information system (GIS) format for easy integration into GIS applications used for situational awareness. The page also will provide radar images more frequently and in higher resolution—4 times higher! In addition, the new page is mobile-friendly, a boon to everyone from emergency management to the

public who monitor weather on the go. The upgrade will also move the NWS off the soon-to-be-obsolete Adobe Flash technology.

“NWS added new features to our radar webpage based on feedback we received from our core partners in the emergency management community,” said Paul Kirkwood, Technology Infusion Branch Chief, NWS Southern Region, and Radar Webpage Project Lead. “We now use GIS technology so EMs can incorporate our GIS formatted animated radar loops in their own situational awareness databases to help make location-based decisions.” New radar viewer does the following:

- ◆ Delivers radar images more frequently and at four times higher resolution than available on the current webpage
- ◆ Layers radar data with NWS watches, warnings, and advisories presented on a dynamic map that allows zooming and scrolling
- ◆ Exports radar data into standard GIS formats for easy integrated into emergency manager’s online situational awareness tools
- ◆ Is accessible from any platform, on any device: smartphone, tablet or PC
- ◆ Makes it easier to differentiate between precipitation types, e.g., liquid vs. frozen precipitation
- ◆ Provides a more reliable platform operationally-supported 24x7
- ◆ Offers customizable data for any domain, and data layer preferences can be saved or bookmarked
- ◆ Allows users to see national mosaics of radar data from MRMS (Level 2) for complete radar coverage, even for instances when a single radar is out of service
- ◆ Offers option to save, share radar animation loops and post on social media
- ◆ Allows for easy integration of new datasets in the future, e.g., satellite and other observational data



New radar.weather.gov web page is available on your mobile phone and it displays images more frequently and at four times higher resolution. Credit: NOAA.

NWS will run the new webpage in parallel with the current one to give users time to transition to the new specifically, [Radar Integrated Display with Geospatial Elements II \(RIDGE II\) radar services](#). Check out the new webpage at preview-radar.weather.gov until Dec. 8 when it will become radar.weather.gov.

The new website is a significant improvement for general and advanced radar users. Providing more accessible weather radar data to the public is another step in our efforts to build a [Weather Ready Nation](#).

For operational issues, contact the helpdesk at sdm@noaa.gov. For questions about geospatial services, please visit [IDP-GIS web services](#).

Are you an Alaskan interested in weather? Consider becoming a volunteer

By [Audrey Rubel](#), Physical Scientist, Alaska Region Headquarters, Anchorage, AK

If you are a weather enthusiast and have time to spare, the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) network could use your help. CoCoRaHS, pronounced “KO-ko-rozz,” is a unique, non-profit, community-based network of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds who work together to measure and map rain, hail, snow and soil moisture. Volunteers take measurements of precipitation and report findings on the CoCoRaHS website. Meteorologists, hydrologists, emergency managers, utility workers,



School children in Anchorage, Alaska making measurements. Courtesy of Sayako Kanie, CoCoRaHS observer.

insurance adjusters, engineers, farmers, ranchers, recreation interests, teachers and students are some who use the data.

The only requirements to join are enthusiasm for measuring and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can affect and impact our lives.

You may also need to make a small investment in a rain gauge and a snow board. You can find easy training videos for measuring precipitation [on the CoCoRaHS YouTube channel](#).

So if you have time and an interest in monitoring and reporting your local weather conditions, please visit <https://www.cocorahs.org> to learn more. The program particularly needs volunteers in more isolated areas, like Alaska. If you decide to join, once at the CoCoRaHS website, just click on “Join CoCoRaHS.”

Sending Hope to Hurricane Victims in Weather Balloons

Excerpted from an article in Acadiana, LA, Advocate, by Megan Wyatt, Staff Writer

A hopeful message landed in Jeannie Doucet’s Lafayette backyard one Monday afternoon as she taught English virtually to her 8th grade students during a thunderstorm. Doucet glanced out the window and spotted what she thought was a downed electrical wire from the heavy rain. When she looked closer, she realized it was an NWS Lake Charles, LA, balloon.

The curious box, which arrived by parachute, didn’t just have technical information and instructions. It also had a message written in red marker: “We will rebuild. Stay strong.”

Doucet’s home didn’t suffer damage from Hurricane Laura like so many others in southwestern Louisiana. Still, the message brightened her day. That was the nicest moment,” Doucet said. “I just kind of had an image of this scientist writing that message, and it was just kind of a pleasant moment.”

The scientist behind the message is Meteorologist Chanelle Stigger, at NWS Lake Charles. Stigger has been writing thoughtful messages nearly every day for the two years she’s been on the job. She’s never heard back from anyone who’s spotted a message until a reporter reached out for this story.

“Most of my coworkers just write ‘This isn’t a weapon’ or something like that,” Stigger said. “But I’m kind of a cheery person, and I want to spread more joy. That’s kind of my aim in life, not just at work. I’m the one trying to spread cheer and joy and happiness.”

Releasing a radiosonde weather balloon is a routine task done twice per day. As many as four per day go up during inclement weather events, such as hurricanes. Each radiosonde transmits data through radio waves back to the office to help meteorologists forecast weather conditions. The balloon only transmitted information on the way up. After about 110 minutes of flight, the radiosonde parachutes down, often landing in rural areas or bodies of water. “We’ve had balloon launches land back at the office,” said NWS lake Charles Meteorologist Roger Erickson. “Typically they don’t go far in the summer, but in the wintertime,

they can be carried all the way to Mississippi.”

Stigger usually follows her heart when deciding what to write on a radiosonde on any given day: I hope you have a fantastic Friday! Stay cool! We hope you have a great Thanksgiving!

“I know these aren’t always found,” Stigger said. “But it’s nice to know there’s a fun message on them in case they are.”

Since Hurricane Laura devastated the Lake Charles region, Stigger has written hopeful messages meant for victims who are still piecing together their lives. The storm wasn’t just something her team covered in a professional capacity. All two dozen of the employees who the Lake Charles office were personally impacted by Hurricane Laura and again by Hurricane Delta.

Stigger said she had the least amount of damage out of her colleagues, just water damage to the roof of her apartment unit. Some employees had their roofs ripped off by wind or smashed by fallen trees.



NWS Lake Charles, LA, Meteorologist Chanelle Stigger

Winter Is Coming: Prepare for Winter Weather Webinar

By [Stephen Baxter](#), PhD, NWS Winter Program Lead, Silver spring, MD

NWS invites you to join us on October 29, 2020, from 2 – 3 pm EDT for an online Winter Weather Program briefing aimed at our partners. The briefing will provide:

- ◆ Short review of winter 2019/2020 and Winter Weather Program initiatives
- ◆ Preview of the 2020-2021 Winter Weather Program season updates
- ◆ Discussion on vision, messaging, and future initiatives for the program
- ◆ Open discussion among all participants

[Please register for the webinar at this link](#). For more information please contact Stephen.Baxter@noaa.gov, NWS Winter Weather Program Lead.”



Aware

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