

WASHTENAW AREA MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION POLICY

Reference Number:	106
Subject:	Severe Weather Notifications
Approved Date:	February 7, 2023
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Revision Number:	1
Signature of Approval:	<small>WAMAA PRESIDENT – James Rachwal</small>

PURPOSE:

To develop a procedure for fire service notifications for severe weather events.

DEFINITIONS:

National Weather Service Definitions - The National Weather Service issues a variety of products to keep their customers informed of unusual, inconvenient and hazardous weather conditions. A multi-tier concept is employed to accomplish this task with Outlooks, Watches, Warnings and Advisories to point out specific conditions.

Advisory - Issued when a hazardous event is occurring or has a very high probability of occurrence. Advisories describe events that cause significant inconvenience.

Outlook - Used to give considerable lead time that a hazardous event may develop in the next 7 days.

Watch - Issued when the risk of a hazardous weather or hydrologic event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to set their plans in motion can do so.

Warning - Issued when a hazardous event is occurring or has a very high probability of occurrence. Warnings advise of a threat to life or property.

CONVECTIVE EVENTS - PRODUCT	THRESHOLDS
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING - SVR	Winds 50 kts (58 mph or implied by damage), and/or hail 1 inch or greater

TORNADO WARNING - TOR	Tornado occurring or developing
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WATCH - WCN	Thunderstorms capable of Winds 50 kts (58 mph or implied by damage), and/or hail 1 inch or greater. Issued by SPC, 0-8 hours.
TORNADO WATCH - WCN	Thunderstorms capable of producing tornadoes. Issued by SPC, 0-8 hours.
SIGNIFICANT WEATHER ALERT - SPS	Winds 40+ mph (35 kts), hail 1/2 inch or greater and/or frequent/continuous lightning
HYDRO & LAKESHORE EVENTS - PRODUCT	THRESHOLDS
FLOOD WATCH - FFA	Possible long duration flooding over a general area more than 6 hrs after main rainfall
FLASH FLOOD WATCH - FFA	Possible short/long duration flooding over a general area less than 6 hrs after main rainfall
LAKESHORE FLOOD WATCH - CFW	Possible flooding affecting homes, businesses, or roads along the lakeshore within the next 1-3 days
FLASH FLOOD WARNING - FFW	Flooding that produces life/property threat in 0-6 hrs
FLOOD WARNING - FLW	Flooding that lasts 6 hrs or more over a general area and/or affects mainstem rivers that is a threat to life/property
LAKESHORE FLOOD WARNING - CFW	Flooding affecting homes, businesses, or roads along the lakeshore within the next 0-48 hours
FLOOD ADVISORY- FLS	Inconvenience flooding in 0-24 hrs

LAKESHORE FLOOD ADVISORY - CFW	Flooding affecting beaches, docks, marinas, and watercraft along the lakeshore within the next 0-48 hours
MARINE EVENTS - PRODUCT	THRESHOLDS
SPECIAL MARINE WARNING - SMW	Winds (convective or non-conv) 34 kts for 2 hrs or less, hail 3/4 inch and/or waterspouts
GALE WARNING - MWW	Sustained winds 34 to 47 kts or freq gusts 34 to 47 kts expected within 24 hours
STORM WARNING - MWW	Sustained winds 48 to 64 kts or freq gusts 50 to 64 kts expected within 24 hours
HURRICANE FORCE WIND WARNING - MWW	Sustained winds 65+ kts expected within 24 hours
HEAVY FREEZING SPRAY WARNING - MWW	Heavy freezing spray is expected within 24 hours
MARINE WATCH - MWW	Issued when warning criteria (except SMW) is expected within 72 hours
MARINE WEATHER STATEMENT - MWS	Winds (convective or non-conv) <34 kts, hail <3/4 inch, and/or thunderstorms
LOW WATER ADVISORY - MWW	Water is expected to be several inches below chart datum for an extended period of time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider when an NPW is in effect for High Wind - Issue when Gale Warning is in effect for Saginaw Bay - Coordinate with WFO CLE for Michigan waters of Lake Erie - Water falls below 36" on Detroit River at Gibraltar
SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY - MWW	Winds 22-33 kts and/or waves > 3 ft - Nearshore Waters Only
DENSE FOG ADVISORY - MWW	Widespread vsby 1 mile or less
COLD-SEASON EVENTS - PRODUCT	THRESHOLDS
WINTER STORM WARNING - WSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Heavy snow: Heavy snow including lake-effect with winds less than 35 mph <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 inches within 12+ hours - 6 inches within 8 hours ☞ Mix: A combo of 2 or more of the following: heavy snow, sleet, freezing rain/drzi ☞ Forecaster Discretion: Winter Storm Warn for lesser amts

	<p>in shorter time pd w/ blwg snow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Heavy sleet: Sleet accums of 3+ inch in 12 hours or less
SNOW SQUALL WARNING - SQW	Snow squalls reducing visibility to 1/4 mile or less, for 15 minutes or more, on dry frozen highways
BLIZZARD WARNING - WSW	Sustained winds or freq gusts 35+ mph and falling/blowing snow with vsby near 1/4 mile or less for 3 hrs (only blowing snow needed for ground blizzard)
ICE STORM WARNING - WSW	Ice accum over 1/4 inch in 12 hours or less
WIND CHILL WARNING - WSW	Wind chills or air temperature 25 below or colder
WINTER STORM WATCH - WSW	Issued when Warning criteria is expected 12-72 hours in the future
WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY - WSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Snow (including lake-effect): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ≥ 4 inches but < 8 inches in 12+ hours - > 2 inches but < 6 inches in less than 8 hours ☞ Light freezing rain or freezing drzl with ice accum $< 1/4$ inch in 12 hr or less ☞ Mix: Mix of snow, sleet, freezing rain/drizzle ☞ Sleet: Sleet accums 1/2 to 3 inch in 12 hours or less ☞ Snow & blowing/drifting snow: Wind driven snow, blowing snow, intermittent vsbys 1 mile or less for 3 hours or more with winds 25 to 34 mph ☞ Blowing snow: Blowing snow reducing vsbys to 1 mile or less with winds < 35 mph
WIND CHILL ADVISORY - WSW	Wind chills or air temperature 15 to 24 below for 2 or more hours
WINTER STATEMENT - SPS	<p>- Warning/Advisory in effect: issued to highlight area of heaviest snow, sleet, or freezing rain/drizzle in next 2-4 hours</p> <p>- No Warning/Advisory in effect: issued to highlight area of snow, or sleet, or freezing rain/drizzle causing localized travel impacts in next 2-4 hours</p>
NON-PRECIP EVENTS - PRODUCT	THRESHOLDS
HIGH WIND WARNING - NPW	Sustained winds 40+ mph (35 kts) for 1 hr or more, or any gust 58+ mph (50 kts)

EXCESSIVE HEAT WARNING - NPW	A 3 hr period of Heat Index 105 or more; continue into the night with Heat Index around 80 or more. Can be issued at lower heat index values for consecutive days of excessive heat.
RED FLAG WARNING - RFW	Winds 15+ mph (20 ft level on NFDR sites), RH 25% or lower, temps 75+F, and critically dry fuels combine to produce extreme fire danger and/or fire behavior within 24 hours in coordination with government land management agencies
FREEZE WARNING - NPW	During growing season, widespread temps of 32 F or less
RED FLAG WATCH - RFW	Issued when Red Flag Warning criteria is expected 24 to 48 hours in the future
NON-PRECIP WATCH - NPW	Issued when Warning criteria is expected 12-48 hours in the future
AIR STAGNATION ADVISORY - NPW	Major buildup of air pollution/particulate due to stable atmos. conditions (initiated by Michigan EGLE)
HEAT ADVISORY - NPW	A 3 hr period of Heat Index 100 or more; continue into the night with Heat Index around 80 or more. Can be issued at lower heat index values for consecutive days of excessive heat.
WIND ADVISORY - NPW	Sustained winds 30+ mph (26 kts) for 1 hr or more, or any gust 45+ mph (39 kts)
DENSE FOG ADVISORY - NPW	Widespread vsby 1/4 mile or less for 3 hours or more
DENSE SMOKE ADVISORY - NPW	Smoke producing widespread or localized vsby 1/4 mile or less
BLOWING DUST ADVISORY - NPW	Widespread/localized vsbys less than 1 mile for 3 hrs or more with sustained winds 25 mph
FREEZING FOG ADVISORY - NPW	Fog, usually with vsby 1/2 mile or less, freezing on cold objects with deposits resulting in impact to commerce, transportation, people, etc.
FROST ADVISORY - NPW	During growing season, widespread frost (temps usually 33-37 F)
DENSE FOG - SPS	Vsby 1/2 mile or less

PROCEDURE:

1. Washtenaw Central Fire Dispatch shall make the following notifications to area fire departments upon receiving notification of a severe weather event.
 - 1.1. Dispatch utilizing the County Fire All Call Tone one time with the applicable voice message, and send out via Active 911 notifications for the following convective weather events:

- 1.1.1. Tornado Warnings
- 1.1.2. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings when winds are forecasted to be greater than 75 mph. or greater (note that the NWS criteria requires only 58 mph forecasted winds).
 - 1.1.2.1. The dispatcher does not need to provide any details other than identifying the Tornado Warning or Severe Thunderstorm Warning on the voice message, but should provide the details of the weather message on Active911.
 - 1.1.2.2. Fire personnel seeking additional information on the event, can check Active911 or other weather news app.
- 1.1.3. All other weather advisory, watch, or warnings shall be sent out **only** via Active 911 notifications with the pertinent details of the weather event.