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SERVING NWS SKYWARN SPOTTERS,
CO-OP OBSERVERS & COCORAHS OBSERVERS

Sage Winds

National Weather Service - Boise, Idaho

www.weather.gov/boise

Isaac & His Aftermath

On August 28th, almost seven years to the day that Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, Hurricane Isaac made landfall on the coast of southeast Louisiana. Although weaker than Katrina, Isaac still packed a serious punch. Its slow movement and shear size combined forces to wreak havoc across the Gulf Coast - mainly in the form of flooding from the associated storm surge and torrential rains.

Levees broke. Cities flooded. Trees and power lines toppled—leaving thousands without power. In some areas, the effects were worse than Katrina.

IN A NUTSHELL

- A 'Category 1' hurricane.
- Maximum sustained winds of 80 mph.
- More than 834,000 people, across 5 states, were without power.
- Over 20 inches of rain fell in portions of New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Its storm surge reversed the flow of the Mississippi River, near New Orleans, for nearly 24 hours.
- It caused extensive inland flooding & several levee breaks across southeast Louisiana.



- After ravaging the Gulf Coast, it tracked inland bringing much needed rainfall to drought-stricken states such as Arkansas and Missouri.

- Lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina were put into effect after 2007. These adjustments and safety precautions likely saved many lives as Isaac moved inland.

Smoke On The Water

It's dry. Very dry.

The bulk of our forecast area, which includes southeast Oregon and southwest Idaho, has received no significant rainfall since late May. An exception was in the Magic Valley where spurts of monsoon moisture caused rounds of thunderstorms—some with measurable rain. At the Boise airport, this summer (June, July, & August) was the driest since 1957. These abnormally dry conditions greatly enhanced the threat of wildfire starts.

Trinity Ridge

In the Treasure Valley, the main smoke offender has been the Trinity Ridge Fire near Featherville, Idaho. In fact, early morning drainage winds continue to pull smoke down canyons and into the Treasure Valley. The daily intensity has varied, and is determined by the degree of fire activity and fluctuations in local winds.

Halstead & Mustang

Two other major wildfires, the Halstead and the Mustang Complex, continue to burn near the Middle Fork and the Main Salmon rivers, respectively. These fires have also caused serious smoke issues and, as bad as air quality conditions have been in the Treasure Valley, other cities (like Hailey and Salmon, Idaho) have experienced far worse conditions. Unfortunately, complex terrain and very dry weather are making firefighting and fire containment very difficult.



Weather In The News

[Dual-Pol Technology: Questions & Answers](#)

[“After Isaac, Louisiana and Mississippi Residents Face Dangerous Heat...” - CNN](#)

[“Crews Make Good Headway Against Oregon Wildfires” - OregonLive](#)

[“Isaac Gives Drought-Stricken Farmers Brief Respite” - ABC News](#)

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Dual-Pol Is Coming!

Our local NWS radar, located just south of the Boise airport, is about to get a serious makeover! NWS radars nationwide will be upgrading to dual-polarization technology, otherwise known as “dual-pol”. When complete, it will be the most significant upgrade to the national radar suite in nearly twenty years!

What is dual-pol?

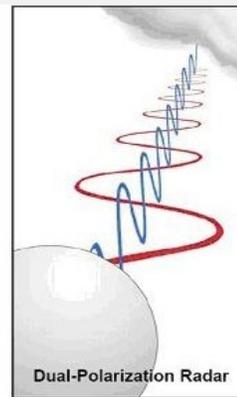
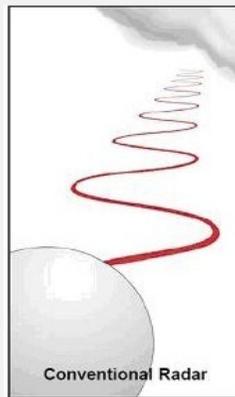
Conventional radars transmit a horizontal pulse, which tells forecasters that ‘something’ is present. Dual-pol radars, on the other hand, transmit pulses in both the vertical *and* horizontal directions. The information from both pulses gives a more informative and more useful two-dimensional picture of what’s occurring. This complete “picture” helps forecasters identify

that “something” as rain, hail, snow, or even birds! Basically, dual-pol will help us differentiate between precipitation types and improve our overall situational awareness in all types of weather scenarios. In fact, dual-pol has been used to confirm tornado touchdowns by identifying tornadic debris ‘in-flight’.

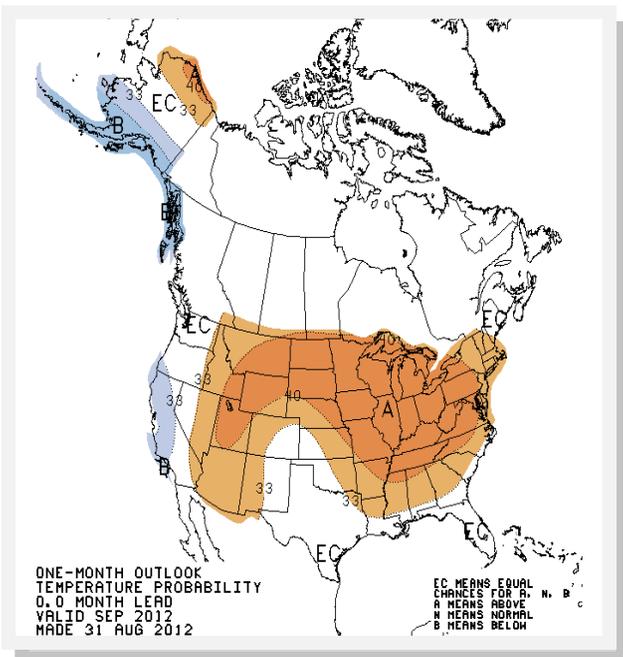
[\(Detecting Tornadoes with Dual-Pol Technology\)](#)

When will the upgrade occur?

Right now! The Boise radar is currently receiving its dual-pol upgrade! During this time, the radar will be offline for maintenance and thus no radar data will be available. The upgrade will take approximately one week to complete.



September Outlook



Temperature Outlook
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Precipitation Outlook
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