



NOAA's NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Western Region Notes

June 30, 2005

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



Leadership and Innovation For Tomorrow: I am pleased to announce we will soon be accepting applications for the next Leadership and Innovation For Tomorrow (LIFT) class.

LIFT is leadership program designed to reach staff at all levels of their careers and help them develop leadership skills. Any Western Region employee is eligible to apply for this program, except MICs, HICs, and Western Region Headquarters Division Chiefs.

More information will be coming soon.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: This week's Statement of the Week is a severe thunderstorm warning issued by the WFO Spokane forecast team of Robin Fox, Matt Fugazzi, Todd Lericos and Verne Ballard. The severe thunderstorm was a high based event with little or no rain and relative low reflectivity (max of 40 dBZ). The SVR was based on high doppler velocities descending from the storm. A short lead time was achieved on a record breaking gust of 77 mph at the Spokane International airport. Considerable damage was also noted in the West Plains area, including Fairchild AFB. The call to action statement was very appropriate, calling to attention the possibility of high wind ahead of the storm track. Great work Spokane.

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SVROTX
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BULLETIN - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SPOKANE WA
619 PM PDT TUE JUN 21 2005

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN SPOKANE HAS ISSUED A
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING FOR...
CENTRAL SPOKANE COUNTY IN EASTERN WASHINGTON
THIS INCLUDES THE CITY OF SPOKANE

* UNTIL 645 PM PDT

* AT 607 PM PDT...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A SEVERE THUNDERSTORM CAPABLE OF PRODUCING DAMAGING WINDS IN EXCESS OF 60 MPH. THIS STORM WAS LOCATED 17 MILES SOUTHWEST OF SPOKANE... OR ABOUT NEAR CHENEY...AND MOVING NORTHEAST AT 35 MPH.

* THE SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WILL BE NEAR... SPOKANE BY 635 PM PDT

WIND DAMAGE WITH THIS STORM WILL OCCUR WELL AHEAD OF ANY RAIN OR LIGHTNING. DO NOT WAIT FOR THE SOUND OF THUNDER BEFORE TAKING COVER. SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY INSIDE A STURDY STRUCTURE AND STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS.

LAT...LON 4753 11778 4746 11754 4771 11722 4778 11763

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(L to R) Jay Wilson (Oregon Emergency Management Tsunami Program Coordinator), Steve Todd (WFO Portland MIC), Lisa Phipps (Rockaway Beach Mayor), Tom Manning (Tillamook Emergency Manager), Luanne Swanson (Rockaway Beach City Council), Joanne Dickinson (Rockaway Beach City Manager).

Rockaway Beach, Oregon Receives TsunamiReady

Designation: On June 24, 2005, WFO Portland conducted a TsunamiReady recognition ceremony in Rockaway Beach, Oregon to designate the community of Rockaway Beach as both TsunamiReady and StormReady. Rockaway Beach became the 19th community in the nation to receive the TsunamiReady designation. The local CBS television affiliate from Portland as well as several local newspaper outlets covered the event.

Guest speakers at the ceremony included the Tillamook County Emergency Manager, Oregon State Emergency Management's Tsunami and Earthquake Program Coordinator, the Mayor of Rockaway Beach, and WFO Portland's MIC Steve Todd and WCM Tyree Wilde. MIC Steve Todd presented the TsunamiReady and StormReady signs to the mayor of Rockaway Beach as the finale of the ceremony.

Ergonomics at Glasgow: Jackie Couture, a safety and occupational health specialist with the USDA Agricultural

Research Station in Sidney, Montana, recently visited WFO Glasgow to discuss ergonomics and daily use of computer workstations. The staff mailed her their individual ergonomics surveys, from which she developed a recommendations list for each person. After a PowerPoint presentation, she worked with each person individually to set up their workstations to be at the ideal settings to reduce pain and strain. Some of the recommendations included:

1. Remove the sharp edges on the workstation desks by using gel pads. The sharp edges that our wrists sit on could aggravate carpal tunnel syndrome or tendonitis.
2. Ideal office humidity is 35 to 45%. With an office in a drier climate, 40-45% would work best. Temperatures should be in the 68 to 75 degrees range with 70 degrees usually the standard to suit all employees.

3. If you grab your mouse as if it is going to run away at any moment, you may benefit from having a mouse gel pad. You should be guiding the mouse with your palm, not your fingers.
4. Your monitor should be an arms length away from you, and eye level should be between the middle and top of the screen. Your keyboard and mouse should be at or near the edge of the desk. Ergonomic keyboards that are split down the middle are preferable for people with wrist problems.
5. Eighty percent of workers who use computers have Computer Vision Syndrome, which is identified by tired eyes, burning eyes, dry or watery eyes, and headaches. A higher humidity may help, as well as keeping the monitor at an arms length and having your monitor at the proper height. Also, flat screen monitors are best for people who work on computers for long amounts of time, because they reduce the glare. If you don't have one, you can buy an antiglare filter to fit over an existing monitor. Look up from your monitor frequently, and stand up and stretch at least once an hour. Blink often. If you are hunched forward at your desk, stand up and roll your shoulders back several times to undo the strain.
6. Set up your chair for your individual needs. The back support should hit you right at the maximum curve in your back. Arms should be at a 90 degree angle where the elbow bends. The neck and back should be in a straight line. The knees need to be just a tad bit higher than the hips. Foot rests are available through GSA.

More information is available at: <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/>.



Senior Forecaster Jim Reynolds provides a summer weather spotter training class to 65 attendees, while Journeyman Forecaster Dan Weygand takes care of regular WFO operations

WFO Medford Smashes Local Spotter Training

Attendance Record: On June 16, Senior Forecaster Jim Reynolds provided a summer weather spotter training class. Attendees began showing up 20 minutes early. By the scheduled time, 30 people had already shown up for the presentation, which exceeded the seating capacity of the office's conference room, and more were still coming. The group was moved to the operations area, where Jim arranged an impromptu set-up for a large crowd of 65 people. The standing room-only crowd was attributed to a TV interview Jim provided earlier in the day and was broadcast on the local afternoon news. Additionally, severe weather awareness had been recently heightened in the Medford area by a large-scale lightning event on May 27-28, which included early morning convection and a frequency of lightning strikes that exceeded any event in the memories of local citizens.

Tornado Workshop in Sacramento: Following the most active tornado season on record, WFO Sacramento invited local on-camera television meteorologists, other members of the media, and emergency management officials to a tornado workshop. The meeting was designed to share information about tornadoes and dispel lingering perceptions that "California tornadoes aren't important."

After reviewing California tornado climatology and the records set this year, attendees were given a

quick lesson in tornado genesis and were shown how difficult it can be to pick out tornadic cells in some situations. The workshop concluded with a look at how tornado confirmation is achieved and how the F-scale rating is determined. The main points of the workshop included the following: (1) even though 2005 is a record year, there likely were tornadoes which occurred but which were not recorded; (2) tornadic storms in California exhibit the same features as their tornado alley cousins, but in miniature form; and (3) although California tornadoes usually are less than F2 on the Fujita Scale and none have killed anyone yet, up to \$25 million in damages have been done by F0 California tornadoes.



who so generously participated!

WFO Reno Celebrates 2nd Annual “Bring Your Pet to Work Day”: On June 27, staff at WFO Reno brought in more than 30 pets (stuffed) to work. The critters were donated to the Northern Nevada "Make a Wish Foundation". This year marks the foundation's 25th anniversary of making wishes come true for terminally ill children.

The "Make-A-Wish" Foundation's Director of Program Services, Sherry Johnson, said the stuffed animals are perfect ice-breaker gifts for when the Foundation first meets with a terminally ill child and their family. A big thank you to all of the Reno staff

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

An international workshop titled, “Hydrological Forecasting Systems in Support of Water Management and Prevention of Disasters of Hydrometeorological Origin” was held June 20-24th at the Czech University of Agriculture in Suchdol, a village near Prague in the Czech Republic. Dave Brandon, HIC at the CBRFC presented 10 lectures which focused on hydrologic forecasting in the United States. Topics varied from a general description of the NWS Hydrology Program to technical discussions of the models used in the NWSRFS. There were 15 participants representing seven eastern European countries. Curt Barrett, Project Director in the International Activities Office, NWSH, also participated in the workshop.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

2 New COMET Training Modules:

Tsunami Training: COMET has released a new training module on Tsunamis. It can be found at: <http://www.comet.ucar.edu/~rkoehler/tsunami/tsunami%20module/>.

The module takes about 30 minutes to complete and covers the basics of tsunami formation and coastal impacts. It is highly recommended for all offices.

Aviation/CWSU Training: COMET has released a new training module entitled “The Impact of Weather on Air Traffic Management.” This module is geared primarily to CWSU and other aviation meteorologists. It can be found at: <http://www.meted.ucar.edu/nas/>.

The module was developed at the request of NOAA's Assistant Administrator for Weather Services, David L. Johnson, and is designed to help staff at the CWSUs and WFOs better understand the National Airspace System (NAS) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The module describes the various components of the FAA, how that organization manages air traffic, and how CWSU and WFO forecasts help the FAA's decision-making process.

Hydrologic Research to Operations Meeting: WR is organizing a hydrology research to operations meeting October 4-6. The purpose of the meeting is to build relationships between the research and NWS operations communities to apply current and future research to solve problems in hydrology operations at the RFCs and WFOs.

The website for the meeting is: <http://www.wr.noaa.gov/hydroscience/>

Please contact Kevin Werner (WR/SSD) with any questions.

Call for University Assignment Proposals: OCWWS recently announced the University Assignment Program (UAP) call for applications for 2005-2006. The deadline for completed applications is July 1. If you wish to apply, please note that transcripts are not required, but can be submitted if more convenient for you to do so. Further details can be found in NWS Instruction 20-104, University Assignment Program, located at <http://www.weather.gov/directives/020/pd02001004a.pdf> .

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Joe Banas, UAP National Program Coordinator. Email: Joe.Banas@noaa.gov, phone: (301) 713-0463, x168. You may also contact Andy Edman (regional coordinator) at WR/SSD.

New IFPS Training: The first Digital Services course, IFPS/GFE Text Formatters for Forecasters, is available through the NOAA E-learning Learning Management System (LMS). Since the inception of the National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD), text products have been generated using formatters to "unload" or "read" the forecasts from the grids. The process involves the use of various statistics and code to determine what values or words are important for including in the text. The training is designed to provide the office with an understanding of the IFPS text formatter processing. Mathew Belk, senior forecaster at Taunton, MA is the instructor for this lesson. You can access the course via <http://e-learning.doc.gov/noaa/>. Search the "entire catalog" for IFPS/GFE and select the course title.

New Radar Web Page: The next generation radar display, RIDGE (Radar Integrated Display with Geospatial Elements), <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ridge/>, is the result of a partnership with the North Texas Council of Governments and Southern Region. The RIDGE radar will combine radar images with geospatial elements such as topography maps, highways, and county boundaries. This provides additional reference information for users to understand where the storms are located. RIDGE also adds the ability to overlay polygon warnings issued by the National Weather Service Forecast Offices.

The RIDGE radar will eventually replace the current radar display on the web. Currently southern region is running a prototype version of the software. A brief summary of the implementation process was sent to the offices

Teletraining Sessions for August: The Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT) calendar for August is now available. Offices can register for the teletraining sessions by sending email to: visit@comet.ucar.edu. The teletraining calendar is now at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ecal.asp>

The teletraining planning calendar with other sessions is at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/planning.html>

The current sessions planned for August are:

- Monitoring Gulf Moisture Return with GOES Imagery (Basic, Aug 17)
- Downscaling Technique by Climate Team (Basic, Aug 11, 22, 30)
- CPC Extended Range Forecasts by Climate Team (Basic, Aug 9, 25)
- CPC Long Range Forecasting by Climate Team (Basic, Aug 10, 24)
- CPC Monitoring Products by Climate Team (Basic, Aug 16, 23)

Climate Team sessions are intended for climate focal points and are a prerequisite for additional classroom training.

Several recorded VISIT session are available via LMS: <http://e-learning.doc.gov/coursecatalog/index.cfm>. Then, go to NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COURSES and search on VISIT.

All previous sessions including those with recorded instructor audio and annotations are available at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ts.html>

Advanced Warning Operations Course (AWOC): It is important that offices keep up with the training schedule. In WR, we have broken the two track deadlines up into first and second half of FY05. Completion will be tracked by LMS and reported in the WR Professional Development and Training plan.

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| March 31, 2005: | Complete Core Track (WFO and CWSUs) |
| August 31, 2005: | Complete Severe Weather Track (WFOs and highly recommended for CWSUs) |
| TBD (probably March, 2006): | Winter Weather Track (WFOs) |

For more info on AWOC and LMS go to: <http://wdtb.noaa.gov/courses/awoc/index.html>.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

WRH Selects new RMS: Gar Nelson has accepted the RMS (AWIPS) position at Western Region Headquarters

Management Class: Merri Richmond attended a week-long frequency Management class put on by BLM in Portland, Oregon.