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Service Change Notice 20-73
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
300 PM EDT Fri Aug 14 2020

To: Subscribers:
 -NOAA Weather Wire Service
 -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
 -NOAAPort
 Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From: Michelle Hawkins, Chief
 Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Enhancement of WEA messages for Snow Squall Warnings (SQW) to Include 360 Character English Messages and Spanish Messages in Both 90 and 360 Characters on or after September 15, 2020

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule changes allow for the expansion of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) from the previous maximum of 90 characters to a maximum of 360 characters. These rule changes also allow for transmission of Spanish language WEA messages. NWS solicited public feedback on the proposed expansion of Snow Squall Warnings to the new 360 character maximum, and the proposed content of the NWS messages carried by WEA in English and Spanish, and has finalized these messages. The planned implementation of these Snow Squall Warning WEA messages will be completed on or after September 15, 2020.

The NWS provides messages to WEA for hazards believed to be life threatening, and that have consequences that can be mitigated or minimized by immediate action.

For more detailed information on NWS WEA messages, please refer to Service Change Notice 19-43:

https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdf2/scn19-113weather_api_updatesaad.pdf

The wording to be used in these expanded messages in both English and Spanish are:

90 Character Maximum English Message:
Snow Squall Warning til hh:mm aa tzT. Sudden whiteouts. Icy roads. Slow down! -NWS

360 Character Maximum English Message:
National Weather Service: Snow Squall Warning until hh:mm aa tzT. Slow down or delay travel! Be ready for a sudden drop to near zero visibility and icy roads in heavy snow.

90 Character Maximum Spanish Message:

Aviso de Turbonada de Nieve hasta hh:mm aa tzT. Pobre visibilidad!
Reduzca la velocidad!

360 Character Maximum Spanish Message:

Servicio Nacional de Meteorología: Aviso de Turbonada de Nieve hasta las
hh:mm aa tzT. Reduzca la velocidad o retrase su viaje! Preparese para
una caída repentina de visibilidad cercana a cero y carreteras heladas en
nevadas fuertes.

More information about the changes to WEA Messages for Snow Squall
Warnings can be found in the Product Description Document (PDD) linked
below:

https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/PDD_OplWEA_SnowSquall_2020.pdf

Further questions on the use of WEA for Snow Squall Warnings by the NWS
should be directed to:

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National Service Changes Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification>

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