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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 24-70 Updated  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
1025 AM EST Mon Dec 23 2024

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

From:         Stephen Bieda III, Ph.D., Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public, and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Updated: Changes to Public Weather and Fire Weather Forecast  
Zones for WFO Anchorage, AK: Effective March 18, 2025

Updated to announce the implementation date of March 18, 2025 and to  
update information on when shapefiles will be made available.

Effective Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 1:00 pm Alaska Daylight Time  
(AKDT), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast  
Office in Anchorage, Alaska (WFO AFC) will change Public Weather and Fire  
Weather Forecast Zones throughout the County Warning Area (CWA). After  
this change, all forecasts and related products will use the zone numbers  
and names shown in tables 3 and 4 below.

If March 18, 2025 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation  
will be postponed to March 19, 2025 at 2100 UTC.

These changes will result in a more geographically precise forecast,  
watch and warning products for the general public and fire partners, and  
enhance web-based graphical product consistency and appearance. These  
changes are also intended to help reduce the overalerting effects from  
the current zones in warnings via NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR)  
and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) dissemination modalities.

The 17 current zones will be converted into 51 separate zones. The new  
zones are listed in Tables 3 and 4. Although all zone numbers are  
changing, a few zones are retaining the same name due to changes in  
boundaries being minor. In Alaska, all Universal Geographic Codes (UGC)  
use the UGC-Zone (UGC-Z) format.

Table 1. Universal Geographic Codes (UGC): Current Public Forecast Zone  
Names (Southcentral Alaska Domain)

-----  
AKZ101: Anchorage  
AKZ111: Matanuska Valley  
AKZ121: Western Kenai Peninsula  
AKZ125: Prince William Sound  
AKZ131: Northeast Prince William Sound  
AKZ135: Southeast Prince William Sound

AKZ141: Copper River Basin  
AKZ145: Susitna Valley  
AKZ171: Kodiak Island

Table 2. UGCs: Current Public Forecast Zone Names (Southwest Alaska Domain)

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AKZ153: Middle Kuskokwim Valley  
AKZ155: Kuskokwim Delta  
AKZ161: Greater Bristol Bay  
AKZ181: Alaska Peninsula  
AKZ185: Eastern Aleutians  
AKZ187: Central Aleutians  
AKZ191: Western Aleutians  
AKZ195: Pribilof Islands

Table 3. UGCs: New Public Forecast Zone Names (Southcentral Alaska Domain)

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AKZ701: Anchorage / Eagle River (lower elevations)  
AKZ702: Anchorage Hillside / Upper Eagle River  
AKZ703: Turnagain Arm  
AKZ704: Portage  
AKZ711: Lower Matanuska Valley  
AKZ712: Hatcher Pass  
AKZ713: Matanuska Valley  
AKZ714: Sutton  
AKZ721: Southern Kachemak Bay  
AKZ722: Southwest Kenai Peninsula  
AKZ723: Northwest Kenai Peninsula  
AKZ724: Skilak Lake / Eastern Sterling Highway  
AKZ725: Southern Kenai Mountains / Seward  
AKZ726: Interior Kenai Peninsula  
AKZ727: Turnagain Pass  
AKZ728: West Prince William Sound and Whittier  
AKZ729: Tyonek  
AKZ731: Valdez  
AKZ732: Thompson Pass  
AKZ735: Cordova  
AKZ741: Northern Copper Valley  
AKZ742: Western Copper Valley  
AKZ743: Central Copper Valley  
AKZ744: Ernestine  
AKZ745: Western Susitna Valley  
AKZ746: Southern Susitna Valley  
AKZ747: Central Susitna Valley  
AKZ748: Northern Susitna Valley  
AKZ749: Southern Copper Valley  
AKZ750: Tok Cutoff  
AKZ751: McCarthy  
AKZ771: Kodiak Island Northeast  
AKZ772: Kodiak Island Southwest  
AKZ773: Chignik

Table 4. UGCs: New Public Forecast Zone Names (Southwest Alaska Domain)

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AKZ752: Kuskokwim Valley West
AKZ753: Kuskokwim Valley East
AKZ754: Lime Village
AKZ755: Kuskokwim Delta Coast and Nunivak Island
AKZ756: Inland Kuskokwim Delta
AKZ757: Western Capes
AKZ763: Bristol Bay Borough (Naknek and King Salmon)
AKZ764: Northern Bristol Bay Coast
AKZ765: Inland Bristol Bay
AKZ766: Lake Iliamna / Nila Vena / Nanvarpak
AKZ761: Central Alaska Peninsula
AKZ762: Northern Alaska Peninsula
AKZ781: Alaska Peninsula
AKZ785: Eastern Aleutians
AKZ787: Central Aleutians
AKZ791: Western Aleutians
AKZ795: Pribilof Islands
  
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Table 5. NWS Products in Southcentral AK Affected by the WFO Anchorage, AK Public Forecast Zone Changes

| Product Name                             | WMO Heading | AWIPS ID |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| -----                                    | -----       | -----    |
| Area Forecast Discussion                 | FXAK68 PAFC | AFDAFC   |
| Avalanche Weather Guidance               | FWAK48 PAFC | AVGAFC   |
| Special Avalanche Bulletin               | WWAK88 PAFC | SAB AFC  |
| Coastal Flood Watch/Warning/Statement    | WHAK41 PAFC | CFWAER   |
| Coastal Flood Watch/Warning/Statement    | WHAK42 PAFC | CFWALU   |
| Special Weather Statement                | WWAK81 PAFC | SPSAER   |
| Special Weather Statement                | WWAK82 PAFC | SPSALU   |
| Public Information Statement             | NOAK48 PAFC | PNSAFC   |
| Zone Forecast                            | FPAK51 PAFC | ZFPAER   |
| Zone Forecast                            | FPAK52 PAFC | ZFPALU   |
| Winter Weather Watch/Warning/Advisory    | WWAK41 PAFC | WSWAER   |
| Winter Weather Watch/Warning/Advisory    | WWAK42 PAFC | WSWALU   |
| Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory | WWAK71 PAFC | NPWAER   |
| Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory | WWAK72 PAFC | NPWALU   |
| Fire Weather Forecast                    | FNAK51 PAFC | FWFAER   |
| Fire Weather Forecast                    | FNAK52 PAFC | FWFALU   |
| Red Flag Warning                         | WWAK61 PAFC | RFWAER   |
| Red Flag Warning                         | WWAK62 PAFC | RFWALU   |
| Tsunami Warning                          | WEPA41 PAAQ | TSUWCA   |
| Flood/Flash Flood Watch                  | WGAK68 PAFC | FFAAFC   |
| Flood Warning                            | WGAK58 PAFC | FLWAFC   |
| Flash Flood Warning                      | WGAK58 PAFC | FFWAFC   |
| Flood Statement                          | WGAK88 PAFC | FLSAFC   |
| Flood Potential Outlook                  | FGAK78 PAFC | ESFAFC   |
| Point Forecast Matrix                    | FOAK51 PAFC | PFMAER   |
| Point Forecast Matrix                    | FOAK52 PAFC | PFMALU   |
| Recreational Forecast                    | SXUS41 PAFC | RECAER   |
| Short Term Forecast                      | FPAK78 PAFC | NOWAFC   |

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these public and fire weather forecast zone changes.

NWR users with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) receivers do not need to make any changes to their current SAME location code or to the transmitter they have been monitoring to continue receiving warning notifications for their county equivalent. However, all listeners will notice the elimination of some existing public forecast zone names and/or the introduction of some new public forecast zone names with NWR broadcasts as detailed in Tables 3 and 4.

Preliminary shapefiles for public weather forecast zones are available online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/PublicZones>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/Counties>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/FireZones>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/CWABounds>

Since there are NWS partners with systems associating NWS public zones with county equivalent names and/or Federal Information Processing Series (FIPS) codes, the updated zone-county correlation file is online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/ZoneCounty>

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 28, 2025.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/31c6c2b2240a407abe635ad4dd30ba9c>

For more information, please contact:

Aviva Braun  
Warning Coordination Meteorologist  
Anchorage, AK  
[aviva.braun@noaa.gov](mailto:aviva.braun@noaa.gov)  
907-266-5117

National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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