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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 24-70
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1220 PM EDT Thu Jun 27 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: Changes to Public Weather Forecast Zones for WFO
Anchorage, AK: Effective September 10, 2024

Effective Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 1:00 PM Alaska Daylight Time (AKDT), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Anchorage, Alaska (AFC) will change Public 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 below.

If September 10, 2024 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to September 11, 2024 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)

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)

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 / Nanvarpak / Nila Vena
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
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Area Forecast Discussion	FXAK68 PAFC	AFDAFC
Avalanche Weather Guidance	FWAK48 PAFC	AVGAFC
Special Avalanche Bulletin	WWAK88 PAFC	SABAFC
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 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>

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 August 26, 2024.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

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

For a low-bandwidth graphical depiction of this change:

<https://www.weather.gov/afc/NWSAnchorageLandBasedForecastChanges>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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