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Public Information Statement 17-30 Updated  
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To:           Subscribers:  
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From:       Michelle Hawkins, Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Updated: Soliciting Comments through September 20, 2017, on the Proposed Operational Implementation of Polygon-based Snow Squall Warnings and Dust Storm Warnings and Advisory Products

Updated to accept comments through September 20, 2017.

The NWS is seeking feedback on a proposal to operationally implement high localized, polygon-based Snow Squall Warnings, and Dust Storm Warning and Dust Advisory products on a phased basis beginning on or about December 4, 2017.

The proposed products would be issued for a portion of a county or counties within the warned area, as defined and depicted by the polygon Latitude (LAT)/Longitude (LON) point pairs. Portions of counties would be described by ordinal directions (e.g. North, Northeast, East, Southwest, Central etc.). After an initial issuance, NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) would update the product for an extension of area or time by issuing a new product. The NWS WFO issuing the initial message would cancel or allow it to expire when conditions no longer meet criteria.

The existing Dust Storm Warning will split into two products, polygon-based Dust Storm Warning and zone-based Blowing Dust Warning.

The proposed operational warning products would provide three discrete segments per the example below when the following conditions are expected:

Snow Squall Warning:

HAZARD...White-out conditions in heavy snow and blowing snow  
SOURCE...Radar indicated and webcams  
IMPACT...Dangerous life-threatening travel

Dust Storm Warning:

HAZARD...Visibility less than one-quarter mile in blowing dust  
SOURCE...Radar indicated and webcams

IMPACT...Dangerous and life-threatening travel

The proposed operational, polygon-based Dust Advisory would be issued when widespread or localized blowing dust suddenly reduces visibilities to between one quarter of a mile and one mile, resulting in hazardous travel conditions. Neither the Emergency Alert System (EAS) nor Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) would be activated when the Dust Advisory is issued. The existing Blowing Dust Advisory will remain a zone-based product.

The proposed Snow Squall Warning would use the new SQ.W Valid Time Event Code (VTEC) with an operational (O) fixed identifier in the P-VTEC line and Warning (W) significance code. The proposed Dust Storm Warning would use the existing VTEC code DS.W and the proposed Dust Advisory will use the new DS.Y VTEC code. Both of the proposed warning products would use World Meteorological Organization (WMO) headers for dissemination over NOAA Weather Wire Services (NWWS).

NWS would request dissemination of the proposed Dust Storm Warning via EAS using event code DSW. In some areas, and depending on individual state EAS plans, broadcasters would have the choice to activate EAS using the SVS Event Code for the proposed Snow Squall Warning. NWS would broadcast the proposed operational warnings over NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) and disseminate them using Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) and 1050 Hz warning alarm tones. NWS would also display the warning polygon on NWS radar depictions.

NWS would also activate WEA for broadcast of the proposed polygon-based Dust Storm Warning to WEA-capable cell phones in the warning area. The proposed operational polygon-based DSW is intended to better approximate the actual warning areas than do the current zone-based Blowing Dust Warnings, which are not depicted by polygon and can only be geo-targeted by WEA at the county level.

The proposed Snow Squall Warning would appear on the NWS weather.gov webpage as well as the local WFO webpages with a priority of number 23 and display color of medium violet red. The proposed Dust Storm Warning and Advisory would be displayed using the colors and priorities of the existing zone-based Dust Storm Warning (color bisque) and Blowing Dust Advisory (color dark khaki).

The proposed Snow Squall Warning and Dust Storm Warning products would be provided in Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) format through several dissemination methods. CAP is pre-parsed and is intended for use by the weather enterprise and other partners. For more information on CAP and how to obtain it via NOAAport, NWS Internet Dissemination Program (IDP) file services, in raw eXtensible Markup Language (XML) format or via a web service Application Programming Interface (API), please see the following Service Change Notice (SCN):

<https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdfs/scn17-35capaaa.pdf>

Additional information and examples of these proposed operational products can be found in the Product Description Documents here:

Dust Storm Warning/Dust Advisory:

<http://products.weather.gov/PDD/PDD%20for%20DSW.pdf>

Snow Squall Warning:

<http://products.weather.gov/PDD/PDD%20for%20Experimental%20Snow%20Squall%20Warning.pdf>

If comments are favorable, the NWS proposes to operationally implement the proposed products beginning on or about December 4, 2017, on a phased basis to eventually include all offices. After an initial rollout to include eight Snow Squall Offices and two Dust Storm Warning offices, all other WFOs will have the capability to issue both products as necessary software is installed during late winter/early spring 2018. NWS will issues a SCN with additional information before implementation.

Please provide feedback via electronic survey at the following links:

Snow Squall Warning: [www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=SQW1718](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=SQW1718)

Dust Storm Products: [www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=DSWDSY](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=DSWDSY)

If you have any questions or suggestions on the proposed products, please contact:

For Snow Squall Warning:

David Soroka  
Winter Weather Services Program Lead  
NWS Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch  
Silver Spring, MD  
Telephone: 301-427-9346  
Email: [david.soroka@noaa.gov](mailto:david.soroka@noaa.gov)

For Dust Storm Warning and Dust Advisory:

Andy Horvitz  
NWS Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch  
Silver Spring, MD  
Telephone: 301-427-9357  
Email: [andy.horvitz@noaa.gov](mailto:andy.horvitz@noaa.gov)

Additional information on Universal Geographic Code (UGC) and VTEC can be found in NWS Instructions (NWSIs) 10-1701 and NWSI 10-1703, respectively at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/sym/pd01017001curr.pdf>  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/sym/pd01017003curr.pdf>

National Public Information Statements are online at:

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

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