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Public Information Statement 24-53
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
1215 PM EDT Mon Jul 29 2024

To: Subscribers:
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 -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
 -NOAAPort
 -NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards Listeners
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From: Douglas C. Young, Chief
 Digital and Graphical Information Support Branch

Subject: Soliciting Comments through September 16, 2024 on a Proposed Alaska Region change to use the Universal Geographic Code (UGC) County Equivalent Format for Short-Fused Polygon Warning and Advisory Products

The National Weather Service (NWS) Alaska Region is soliciting comments on a proposal to transition Universal Geographic Codes (UGC) from the current NWS zone format to county equivalent format for short-fused polygon warning and advisory products.

Across the contiguous United States, UGCs utilize the UGC-county format for short-fused polygon warning and advisory products in World Meteorological Organization (WMO)-formatted text messages. In Alaska, however, these products currently utilize the UGC-zone format.

The proposal is part of a multi-year, multi-phased approach to facilitate greater targeting of alerts for hazardous weather events across the state. This effort has been closely coordinated with the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Alaska Broadcasters Association.

This specific issue is directly related to overalerting and would allow Alaska Region to potentially implement Partial County Alerting in the future for both NOAA Weather Radio and the Emergency Alert System. Multiple live code tests were conducted utilizing the UGC county format within the past 6 months. There were no issues identified with internal and external dissemination systems when evaluated during these tests.

Table 1. The NWS text products impacted by this proposed change are as follows:

WFO Anchorage:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Flash Flood Statement	WGAK78 PAFC	FFSAFC
Flash Flood Warning	WGAK58 PAFC	FFWAFC
Flood Advisory	WGAK88 PAFC	FLSAFC

Flood Warning	WGAK48 PAFC	FLW AFC
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUAK58 PAFC	SVR AFC
Severe Weather Statement	WWAK58 PAFC	SVS AFC
Tornado Warning	WFAK58 PAFC	TOR AFC

WFO Fairbanks:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Flash Flood Statement	WGAK79 PAFG	FFSAFG
Flash Flood Warning	WGAK59 PAFG	FFWAFG
Flood Advisory	WGAK89 PAFG	FLSAFG
Flood Warning	WGAK49 PAFG	FLWAFG
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUAK59 PAFG	SVRAFG
Severe Weather Statement	WWAK59 PAFG	SVSAFG
Tornado Warning	WFAK59 PAFG	TORAFG

WFO Juneau:

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Flash Flood Statement	WGAK77 PAJK	FFSAJK
Flash Flood Warning	WGAK57 PAJK	FFWAJK
Flood Advisory	WGAK87 PAJK	FLSAJK
Flood Warning	WGAK47 PAJK	FLWAJK
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	WUAK57 PAJK	SVRAJK
Severe Weather Statement	WWAK57 PAJK	SVSAJK
Tornado Warning	WFAK57 PAJK	TORAJK

Examples of current and proposed WMO message formats are provided online at:

https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/alaska_region_ugc_examples.pdf

Through September 16, 2024, please send comments or questions on this proposed change to:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

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

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