

Fire Weather Operating Plan for Tennessee 2010

NWS Morristown, TN

NWS Nashville, TN

NWS Memphis, TN

This operating plan will be a semi-permanent document valid January through December 2010, specifying Fire Weather services provided by the National Weather Service in Tennessee. The plan incorporates procedures detailed in the **Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services**.

Introduction

Purpose of the Operating Plan

This Operating Plan (OP) serves as the official document governing the interaction and relationships between the National Weather Service, and the federal, state and local natural resource and land management agencies or cooperators in Tennessee.

Explanation of relationship between OP and MOU

This Operating Plan is issued in lieu of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Weather Service, federal, state, and other agencies that rely on fire weather support. The plan will outline forecast operations and services available to users. This includes products and formats, dissemination and coordination, and the responsibilities of the partners.

This Operating Plan will be the governing document for fire weather procedures and cooperation among the following agencies:

NOAA National Weather Service

TDA Division of Forestry

USDI National Park Service

USDA Forest Service

The Southern Area Mobilization Guide and the National Mobilization Guide further define the relationship between the natural resource agencies and the NWS Incident Meteorologist.

This Operating Plan for Fire Weather Services conforms with the **Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services**.

Service Area and Organizational Directory

Service Area

The service area covered by this Operating Plan is the state of Tennessee, served by the National Weather Service Weather Forecast Offices at Morristown, TN (MRX), Nashville, TN (OHX), and Memphis, TN (MEG). For a map of the fire weather zones in Tennessee, go to http://www.weather.gov/mirs/public/prods/maps/map_images/state-maps/fire-zones/tn_firezone.pdf.

The **MRX forecast area** covers much of east Tennessee and includes:

<u>Fire weather zone name</u>	<u>Zone number</u>
East Tennessee District (East)	150
East Tennessee District (West)	200
Cumberland District (South)	300
Northern Cherokee National Forest	301
Southern Cherokee National Forest	302
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	303

The **OHX forecast area** covers much of middle Tennessee and includes:

<u>Fire weather zone name</u>	<u>Zone number</u>
Cumberland District (North)	400
Highland Rim District (North)	501
Highland Rim District (South)	502

The **MEG forecast area** covers much of west Tennessee and includes:

<u>Fire weather zone name</u>	<u>Zone numbers</u>
West Tennessee District (North)	1-4, 19-22, 51
West Tennessee District (South)	48-50, 52-55, 88-91

National Weather Service Headquarters

NWS Headquarters, located in Silver Springs, Maryland, establishes policies and coordinates the national fire weather program. The national program manager coordinates the program with the regional program managers. The national program manager also works with the national headquarters of the Federal forestry and other natural resource management agencies and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) in determining overall requirements for meteorological support. The national program manager coordinates national training in forestry and fire weather for NWS forecasters.

National Weather Service Regional Headquarters

Regional Headquarters manage the technical operational aspects of the fire weather program within each region. They also provide guidance and assistance to meteorologists-in-charge (MIC) on program operations and developing issues through Supplements to the National Directives System (NDS) and conferences. Regional Headquarters advise National Headquarters on matters pertaining to technical planning and operations. The regional program managers coordinate the regions' fire weather programs and advise the Regional Directors on the operational and administrative aspects of the regions' programs. The program manager for NWS Southern Region is Paul Witsaman.

Weather Forecast Offices (WFO)

Weather Forecast Offices prepare and disseminate forecast products for all sectors of the population, including those for the Fire Weather program. These offices are responsible for providing forecasts for user agencies within their County Warning Area (CWA). Most offices have a designated fire weather focal point or fire weather program leader.

The National Weather Service Weather Forecast Offices will provide 24-hour, 365 days-a-year service. The NWS WFO's can be reached at:

National Weather Service
5974 Commerce Blvd.
Morristown, TN 37814

National Weather Service
500 Weather Station Rd.
Old Hickory, TN 37138

National Weather Service
7777 Walnut Grove Rd. OM-1
Memphis, TN 38120

NOTE: Unlisted telephone numbers used for coordination cannot be listed here. All user agencies have been or will be provided voice and fax numbers to be used for official purposes only.

Meteorologists-in-Charge (MIC)

The Meteorologists-in-Charge are responsible for the provision of adequate weather services for the offices' assigned areas of program responsibility. The MIC's will ensure that the focal points or program leaders are provided adequate time for user liaison and assistance activities.

George Mathews, Morristown, TN

Larry Vannozzi, Nashville, TN

Jim Belles, Memphis, TN

Program Leaders (or Focal Points)

Fire weather focal points and program leaders are the "customer service representatives" for the program. The focal points or program leaders, as representatives of the MIC's, are in regular contact with the partner agencies, helping them assess their meteorological needs, informing them of NWS products and services available to meet these needs, and educating them in the most effective use of the various NWS products and resources, including NOAA Weather Radio (NWR). Focal points and program leaders will work with users to utilize existing NWS products and services produced for other programs that could meet the requirements of natural resource management. The focal points and program leaders are also tasked with ensuring staff meteorologists are trained and remain proficient in preparing forecast products for support of the fire weather program. Fire Program Leaders can be reached via e-mail on their NWS office fire weather homepage.

David Gaffin, Morristown, TN

John Cohen, Nashville, TN

Michael Scotten, Memphis, TN

Participating Agencies

The following agencies are participants of this Operating Plan:

NOAA National Weather Service

TN Division of Forestry

USDI National Park Service

USDA Forest Service

Services Provided by the National Weather Service

Basic Services

Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF)

The Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) is a zone-type product used by natural resource management personnel primarily for input in decision-making related to pre-suppression and other planning or resource management activities, as well as for determining general weather trends that might impact burning condition and thereby fire behavior of wildfires and prescribed fires. The decisions impact firefighter safety, protection of the public, property, and the natural resource, and resource allocation.

i) Product Overview and Issuance Criteria

The FWF provides a detailed prediction of elements for three specific 12-hour periods (four 12-hour periods with the afternoon forecast) and a general 3 to 7 day forecast. The FWF is issued daily in the morning by 6:00 AM and in the afternoon by 4:00 PM. The Nashville office

will issue a daily afternoon FWF only between February 15th and May 15th, and upon request. The morning FWF contains three periods: "Today" (valid from issuance through 6 PM local time), "Tonight" (6 PM to 6 AM), and "Tomorrow" (6 AM to 6 PM). The afternoon FWF contains four periods: "Tonight" (6 PM to 6 AM), "Tomorrow" (6 AM to 6 PM), "Tomorrow Night" (6 PM to 6 AM), and the "Following Day" (6 AM to 6 PM).

Note: A sample Fire Weather Planning Forecast can be found in the Appendix.

ii) Format/Content of the FWF

Format - The format of the Fire Weather Forecast is specified in National Weather Service Directive 10-401.

Headlines - A headline is **required** when Red Flag Warnings and/or Fire Weather Watches are in effect. The headline will include the warning type, location, reason for issuance (e.g., high winds and low humidity), and effective time period(s). The headline is also included in the body of the FWF, in each appropriate zone grouping. Other headlines are requested since the natural resource agencies are also considered "all risk agencies". When significant weather trends of locally-defined critical weather elements are forecast or observed during non-watch/warning periods, they will be identified in the headline.

Discussion - The discussion should be a brief, clear, non-technical description of the weather patterns that influence the weather in the forecast area.

Cloud Cover ("CLOUD COVER") - This is an indication of the expected sky condition. "Clear" or "Sunny" descriptors are designated when the forecast cloud cover is < 10%; "Mostly Clear" or "Mostly Sunny" are used when cloud cover is forecast to be \geq 10% and < 30%; "Partly Cloudy" or "Partly Sunny" are used when cloud cover is forecast to be \geq 30% and < 60%; "Mostly Cloudy" is used when cloud cover is \geq 60% and < 80%; "Cloudy" is used when cloud cover is forecast to be \geq 80%.

Precipitation Type ("PRECIP TYPE") - This refers to the predominant precipitation type during the forecast period, with an exception. When both "showers" and "thunderstorms" are included in the public forecast, "thunderstorms" will be designated as the precipitation type in the FWF.

Chance of Precipitation ("CHANCE PRECIP") - Refers to the probability of measurable precipitation (0.01 inches or more) during the forecast period. This will be rounded to the nearest 10%. Note: Drizzle and snow flurries are not considered measurable precipitation and thus will not be given a probability.

Temperature ("TEMP") - Refers to the forecasted maximum and minimum temperature for the zone, in degrees F, as measured at a standard 4.5 ft above the ground level. Also included is a 24 hour trend value, noting the difference from the previous day's maximum/minimum temperature.

Relative Humidity ("MAX/MIN RH") - Forecasted minimum relative humidity is provided during the daytime periods (and typically occurs during the warmest part of the day), while maximum RH is included only at night. Also, as with temperature, a 24-hour trend is provided.

Surface Winds ("20FT WND MPH(AM) and 20FT WND MPH(PM)") - Speed and direction of the two-minute averaged wind at 20 feet above the ground (or above the vegetative cover). Wind direction is the direction the wind blows from, to eight points of the compass. Wind gusts, which are rapid fluctuations in wind speed of usually less than 30 seconds in duration, are indicated in the forecast if gustiness is expected. Forecasts for the highest probable wind gust will be preceded by "G".

Precipitation Amount ("PRECIP AMOUNT") - Refers to the forecasted precipitation amount (in hundredths of an inch) whenever the chance of precipitation is 20% or greater.

Precipitation Duration ("PRECIP DURATION") - Refers to the duration of the measurable precipitation (in hours) when the probability of measurable precipitation is greater than or equal to 20%. A precipitation duration forecast of "1" is used for "1 hour or less" duration.

Precipitation Begin/End ("PRECIP BEGIN/END") - Refers to the time measurable precipitation begins or ends.

Mixing Height ("MIXING HGT") - Mixing height is defined as the atmospheric limit above which vigorous vertical mixing does not take place. Mixing height forecasts are given in feet above mean sea level ("FT-MSL").

Transport Wind ("TRANSPORT WND") - Defined as the average wind direction and speed from the surface to the top of the mixed layer. Direction of the transport wind (where the wind is blowing from) and speed will be given. The speed will be in mph, and Memphis will include them in m/s as well.

Haines Index ("HAINES INDEX or LASI") - This index infers the stability of the atmosphere. It utilizes the atmospheric temperature at 950 mb and 850 mb as well as taking into account the moisture levels (dew point depression) at 850 mb. In the mountains, the "mid level" Haines Index is calculated using the temperatures at 850 mb and 700 mb, and the dew point depression at 850 mb. Haines Index values range from 2 through 6. Haines Index values of 5 or 6 serve as an alert that fires or prescribed burns can experience control challenges. Local regional studies have shown that a Haines Index of 4 represents the initiating threshold whereby the atmosphere can support large fire growth. In the absence of strong winds, fire growth will be primarily "plume dominated", with crowning and spotting on all sides. As wind speeds increase, coupled with a starting Haines Index of 4 or greater, there is an increased threat for large wind-driven fires.

Lightning Activity Level ("LAL") - A numerical value (1 through 6 based on the categories listed below), which is used to describe the expected lightning activity for that day.

1: No Thunderstorms.

2: Cumulus clouds are common, but only a few reach the towering cumulus stage. A single thunderstorm must be confirmed in the rating area. The clouds mostly produce virga, but light rain will occasionally reach the ground.

3: Cumulus clouds are common. Swelling and towering cumulus cover less than 2/10ths of the sky. Thunderstorms are few, but two or three must occur within the observation area. Light to moderate rain will reach the ground, and lightning is infrequent.

4: Swelling cumulus and towering cumulus cover 2/10ths to 3/10ths of the sky. Thunderstorms are scattered, but more than three must occur within the observation area. Moderate rain is commonly produced, and lightning is frequent.

5: Towering cumulus and thunderstorms are numerous, they cover more than 3/10ths of the sky and occasionally obscure it. Rain is moderate to heavy, and lightning is frequent and intense.

6: Same as #3, but dry (little or no rain reaching the ground).

Dispersion Index ("DISPERSION") - The dispersion index is computed from forecast variables that include the 20-foot wind speed, mixing height, transport wind, and cloud cover. The index is used by fire managers as a guide for smoke management, since it gives the potential for the atmosphere to disperse smoke. The following are guidelines for the dispersion index:

1-6 = Very Poor

7-12 = Poor

13-20 = Generally Poor

21-40 = Fair

41-60 = Generally Good

61-100 = Good

100+ = Very Good

Ventilation Index ("VENT INDEX") - Refers to a multiplication of the mixing height and transport wind, with units in m^2/s . The ventilation index gives the potential for the atmosphere to disperse smoke.

Note: not included by WFOs MRX and OHX.

Category Day ("CATEGORY DAY") - Based on the ventilation rate. The categories are:

if vent rate is < 2000 , then Category Day = 1

if vent rate is ≥ 2000 and < 4000 , then Category Day = 2

if vent rate is ≥ 4000 and < 8000 , then Category Day = 3

if vent rate is ≥ 8000 and < 16000 , then Category Day = 4

if vent rate is ≥ 16000 , then Category Day = 5

Note: not included by WFOs MRX and OHX.

500 Meter Mixing Height Temperature ("500M MIX HGT TEMP") - Refers to the surface temperature needed to create mixing up to 500 meters above the ground. This temperature usually occurs in the morning.

Note: not included by WFOs MRX and OHX.

500 Meter Transport Wind ("500M TSPT WND") - Refers to the transport wind speed and direction at 500 meters above the ground. The speed will be in mph and also in m/s.

Note: not included by WFOs MRX and OHX.

Remarks - This section will include any specific information that the forecaster feels will aid the overall forecast. Examples would be information about wind shifts, heavy rainfall, and severe thunderstorms.

3 through 7 Day Forecast - This period is an extended forecast for the zone provided in narrative form (non-digital, non-tabular), and appended at the bottom of each zone grouping (for just that zone).

iii) Update Criteria for the Fire Weather Planning Forecast

The Fire Weather Forecaster will maintain a weather watch to ensure that the forecast remains accurate. When unexpected changes occur or are forecast to occur which significantly deviate from the previous forecast, the forecast will be updated. The decision to update, to an extent, is at forecaster discretion. The update criteria for various elements are listed in the Appendix. It is a shared responsibility for the WFO's and the natural resource agencies to monitor the need to update a forecast. Respective agency personnel will also provide feedback as to the updating of an FWF, NFDRS Point, or Spot Forecast.

Site Specific Wildland Fire Forecasts (Spot Forecasts)

i) Criteria

Spot forecasts are special, non-routine forecasts prepared upon request of any federal agency, or state agency when there is some aspect of federal resources involved and/or interagency protection agreements currently exist, that needs site specific weather forecasts for: 1) controlling the spread of wildfire; 2) planning and managing prescribed fires; or 3) other specialized forest management activities. In the event of an emergency which threatens life and/or property, spot forecasts can also be provided to any federal, state, or local agency.

ii) Contents

Spot forecasts are highly detailed forecasts for a specific location within the forecast area. The format of the spot forecast is specified in National Weather Service Directive 10-401. The forecasts will be **headlined** for a **Red Flag Warning** or **Fire Weather Watch**. The forecasts will begin with a discussion, and may contain any or all of the following weather elements: sky conditions; maximum and minimum temperatures, minimum and maximum relative humidity values, wind speed and direction; probability of precipitation; precipitation type, duration and amount; mixing heights; transport wind; inversion height; inversion onset and burnoff times or temperatures; ventilation and smoke management levels; wind profiles and stability indices (i.e., Haines Index), and lightning activity levels (LAL). Since these are site specific and can be initiated because of critical circumstances, tailored products can be requested (e.g. temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed forecasts on a two hour incremental time period).

Note: A sample Spot Forecast can be found in the Appendix.

iii) Procedures for Requesting a Spot Forecast

Spot forecasts will be prepared when requested by a user agency. Federal, state and local agencies may request spot forecasts in support of wildfire suppression or other emergencies where lives and/or property may be threatened. Due to the detailed and specific nature of this forecast product, it's imperative that the user provide the forecaster with necessary and sufficient information so that a reliable forecast can be prepared.

Requests for spot forecasts should be made using the web-based spot forecast request form (<http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=mrx> for east TN, <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=ohx> for middle TN, and <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=meg> for west TN). Instructions on how to use this form can be found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mrx/firewx/spotinstruct.php>. The web-based spot forecast request form should be filled out as completely as possible by the user agency prior to submitting the request. In times when internet access is hindered or not possible, spot

forecasts may be requested and disseminated via fax or phone. If faxing a request, users should use the Fire Weather Special Forecast Request Form, WS Form D-1. Section I of WS Form D-1 should be filled out as completely as possible by the user agency prior to submitting the request by the fax to the forecast office. If the request is made by phone, all information in Section I should be provided to the forecast office.

While there is no dedicated fire weather forecaster, the forecast office will give a high priority to spot forecasts in the absence of weather phenomena that pose a threat to life and property. To ensure that the request for a spot forecast is handled properly and appropriately, users should adhere to the following guidelines:

1) Allow adequate time for the forecaster to prepare the forecast. This will normally be between 20 and 30 minutes. On particularly busy fire weather days, spot forecasts will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis, with wildfires or other life threatening events taking the highest priority.

2) Provide as much on-site or near-site weather information as possible. At a minimum, the user must provide at least one observation within an hour of the request. This observation must contain the following: location of the observation; elevation at the observation site; time of the observation; wind direction, speed, and level (eye or 20 foot); dry and wet bulb temperatures (or dry bulb temperature and relative humidity); any remarks about the state of the weather, particularly anything that may affect fire behavior. If possible, include some observations from the previous day that might give the forecaster an indication of daily trends.

3) As much as possible, specify the time period for which the forecast is needed.

4) As much as possible, specify the weather elements of most importance for which a forecast is needed, and/or critical values of these elements.

5) Provide a contact point name and phone number where the forecaster can call back, if necessary. (Also include a fax number for returning completed forecasts if the web based spot forecast form is not used).

6) In order to receive prompt attention for a fax request, please phone the office to let the forecaster know the request is on the way.

7) Natural resource agency personnel should contact the appropriate NWS forecast office for a spot update if the forecast conditions appear unrepresentative of the actual weather conditions. Whenever possible, users should provide feedback, positive or negative, to the NWS forecast office concerning the performance of the spot forecast during or shortly after an event. This will assist forecasters in subsequent forecasts for the same or similar conditions.

National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) Forecasts

i) Issuance

NFDRS forecasts will be issued for any predetermined site from which an NFDRS observation is received, provided the observation is received on time, is complete, and is deemed accurate. The natural resource agencies will determine which observation sites (normally RAWS sites) will be NFDRS sites. Initiation of NFDRS forecasts for a new site will be coordinated with the NWS, and the agency requesting new NFDRS service will provide the NWS with information about the site location. Forecasts will not be provided for sites with bad data. The NWS will notify the owner agency when bad data is received from a RAWS station.

ii) Contents

The NFDRS forecast will be a forecast of the next day observation at 1300 local time. The format of the NFDRS forecast is specified in National Weather Service Directive 10-401. The forecast will include the following elements:

- a. ZONE/FCST: Shows whether this forecast is for an NFDRS zone or individual station. Zone average trends are forecast when enough observations are available for the zone area. Individual site forecasts are done where only a few observations are available.
- b. NO: NFDRS Zone Number (or individual NFDRS site number).
- c. YYMMDD: Year, month and day of valid forecast time.
- d. 13: Valid forecast time. Always 1300 LST.

e. WX: Weather valid at 1300 LST tomorrow. Valid entries are:

0 = clear

1 = scattered clouds (1/8 to 4/8)

2 = broken clouds (5/8 to 7/8)

3 = overcast clouds (more than 7/8)

4 = fog

5 = drizzle

6 = rain

7 = snow or sleet

8 = showers (in sight or at the station)

9 = thunderstorm

(Categories 5, 6 or 7 sets NFDRS index to 0)

f. TEMP: Temperature in degrees F valid at 1300 LST (or temperature trend + or - degrees F).

g. RH: Relative Humidity in percent valid at 1300 LST (or RH trend + or - percent).

h. LAL1: Lightning Activity Level 1400 LST to 2300 LST (refer to Appendix for LAL definitions).

i. LAL2: Lightning Activity Level 2300 LST to 2300 LST (refer to Appendix for LAL definitions).

j. WDIR: Wind Direction. Used only for point forecast (FCST) version. Enter direction using sixteen point compass (N, NNE, NE, ENE, etc.) valid at 1300 LST (20 ft level, 10 minute average).

k. WSPD: Wind Speed. Enter wind speed in mph (or wind speed trend + or - mph) valid at 1300 LST (20 ft, 10 minute average).

l. 10HR: 10 hour timelag fuel moisture in percent valid at 1300 LST (or trend + or - percent).

m. Tx: Maximum temperature from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow.

n. Tn: Minimum temperature from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow.

o. RHx: Maximum relative humidity from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow.

p. RHn: Minimum relative humidity from 1300 LST to 1300 LST tomorrow.

q. PD1: Precipitation duration in hours 1300 LST to 0500 LST.

r. PD 2: Precipitation duration in hours 0500 LST to 1300 LST.

s. WETFLAG: Y or N. Indicates whether liquid water will be on the fuels at 1300 LST tomorrow. (Use with caution. A "Y" will set all the NFDRS indices to zero!).

iii) Format

The NFDRS Forecast will follow the comma delimited format as shown:

ZONE,NO,YYMMDD,13,WX,TEMP,RH,LAL1,LAL2,WSPD,10HR,TX,TN,RHx,RHn,PD1,PD2,WETFLAG

FCST,NO,YYMMDD,13,WX,TEMP,RH,LAL1,LAL2,WDIR,WSPD,10HR,TX,TN,RHx,RHn,PD1,PD2,WETFLAG

iv) Procedures

The land management agencies are responsible for taking, quality controlling, transmitting and archiving the NFDRS observations. Observation must be received at the NWS in a timely manner. Forecasts will only be prepared for predetermined sites, and only from those sites for which an observation has been received. The data cutoff time for ingest into the NFDRS software is 7 PM.

Fire Weather Watch and Red Flag Programs

During periods in which critical fire weather conditions are expected or imminent, the NWS will issue statements, watches and warnings to describe the level of urgency to the appropriate user agencies. These issuances will be coordinated with natural resource agencies.

i) Definition of a Red Flag Event

A Red Flag event occurs when critical weather conditions develop which could lead to extensive wildfire occurrence or to extreme fire behavior. Red Flag events represent a threat to life and property, and may adversely impact fire fighting personnel and resources. Critical weather conditions include the combination of strong winds, very low relative humidity, and high to extreme fire danger.

Note: Specific criteria can be found in the Appendix.

ii) Red Flag Warning

A Red Flag Warning will be issued, after coordination with the appropriate natural resource agencies, when a Red Flag event is occurring or is imminent. The warning will be issued for all or a portion of the forecast area. It will be issued immediately once the forecaster

and the appropriate natural resource agency have determined that a Red Flag event is ongoing. Otherwise, it shall be issued for impending Red Flag conditions when there is a high degree of confidence that conditions will develop within 24 hours. The warning will continue until the conditions cease to exist or fail to develop as forecast. At such time, the warning will be cancelled. The format of the Red Flag Warning is specified in National Weather Service Directive 10-401.

Note: A sample Red Flag Warning can be found in the Appendix.

iii) Fire Weather Watch

A Fire Weather Watch will be issued, after coordination with the appropriate natural resource agencies, to advise of the possible development of a Red Flag event in the near future. It will be issued for all or part of the forecast area. A Fire Weather Watch is issued when the forecaster and appropriate natural resource agencies are reasonably confident that a Red Flag event will occur. A watch should be issued 12 to 48 hours in advance of, but not more 72 hours in advance of, the expected onset of the critical weather conditions. The watch will remain in effect until either it is determined the Red Flag event will not develop, or that the watch should be upgraded to a warning. If conditions are not expected to occur as forecast, the watch will be canceled. The format of the Fire Weather Watch is specified in National Weather Service Directive 10-401.

Fire Danger Statements (or Fire Weather Notification Messages)

When fire danger or fire occurrence is high and is coupled with critical weather conditions that don't quite meet Red Flag Warning criteria, user agencies may request that the NWS issue a Fire Danger Statement (or Fire Weather Notification Message in west TN). These statements will be issued in coordination with the requesting agency and will only be issued with their approval. WFO MRX and OHX will use the Special Weather Statement (SPS) product for these issuances, while WFO MEG will use the Fire Weather Notification (FWN) product.

Communications

The primary means of communication used by the NWS is the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS). Products transmitted by this means include pre-suppression forecasts, Fire Weather Watches, Red Flag Warnings, and Fire Danger Statements. Spot Forecasts will be disseminated only to the requesting agency by means of the Internet, or as a backup, telefax (FAX). Therefore, anytime a request for a spot forecast is made, the requesting agency must include a FAX number. A voice number should also be included in case problems are encountered with the fax transmission. Other means of communication may be utilized upon mutual agreement with the user agencies.

Public products produced by the National Weather Service are available over NOAA Weather Radio (NWR). See the Appendix for a listing of NWS transmitters servicing Tennessee.

Participation in Interagency Groups

At a minimum, one NWS representative (usually the State Liaison WFO Fire Weather Program Leader or MIC) will attend the State Interagency meetings or working groups where fire weather or smoke management policy is discussed as an integral part of the meeting. However, it's strongly recommended that all NWS offices with fire weather responsibility attend the meetings to ensure uniform representation.

Special Services

Special fire weather services are those services that are uniquely required by natural resource agencies and go beyond the normal forecast operations of the NWS. Special services include Incident Meteorologist (IMET) deployment, station visits, training, and other pertinent meteorological services that are designated as non-routine.

Typically, special services require NWS personnel to be away from the Forecast Office and, in some instances, be in overtime status. User agencies are responsible for covering the cost of NWS overtime, travel and per diem expenses. Reimbursement of costs for special services will be as outlined in the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services

Incident Support

On-site forecast service support is available for wildfires and prescribed burns. This includes the deployment of an Incident Meteorologist (IMET) and related service equipment such as the Advanced Technology Meteorological Unit (ATMU), the All Hazards Meteorological Response System (AMRS), and the Fire Remote Automated Weather Station (Fire RAWS). The IMET, ATMU, AMRS, and the Fire RAWS are considered national fire fighting resources, and can be requested through the Tennessee Interagency Coordination Center.

The ATMU and AMRS are modularized and mobile systems of equipment used by an Incident Meteorologist (IMET) for data collection and forecast preparation. Only trained personnel will operate the ATMU and AMRS, and this service equipment will only be dispatched to an incident when a certified IMET is requested. The IMET is responsible for ordering and arranging shipment for the ATMU and AMRS.

There are 25 ATMUs cached across the country, mostly in the western states. The nearest ATMU cache to the state of Tennessee is London, KY, where two are maintained. AMRS workstations are also pre-positioned across the country, most of which are collocated with existing Weather Forecast Offices that contain certified IMETS. These AMRS workstations are maintained by the IMETS and are typically shipped with the IMET being mobilized.

The ATMU is composed of one large shipping box consisting of a theodolite with tripod, a belt weather kit, PIBAL weather balloons, a nozzle and regulator for a helium tank, and office supplies and miscellaneous expendables. Its volume is 13.8 cubic feet and it weighs 122 pounds.

The AMRS is also composed of one large shipping box, and contains a laptop computer, a satellite dish for obtaining weather data, and a printer. The volume of the satellite dish is 13.8 cubic feet, and its weight is 122 pounds.

Total weight of the ATMU and AMRS is 244 lbs with a volume of 27.6 cubic feet. The cubic feet are necessary for shipment by air. The same specifications shown are listed in the user agencies' National Mobilization Guide.

Requests for the ATMU, AMRS, and IMET should be made through the Tennessee Interagency Coordination Center. Typically, the IMET nearest the incident will be deployed. However, during times of limited resources, IMETs from other areas of the country may be called. The decision will be made by the Special Meteorologist to NIFC (SMC) in conjunction with the MIC and IMET from the affected offices. It is the responsibility of the IMET to arrange shipment of the AMRS workstation.

The success of the operation depends in part on the user agency providing shelter and logistical support. Prior to the use of this equipment, the IMET is expected to have coordinated with the local user agency to ensure proper field support. If an IMET determines that an ATMU and/or Fire RAWS is desirable, it is the IMET's responsibility to ensure the ATMU and Fire RAWS have also been ordered for the incident.

The requesting agency is responsible for any storage of service equipment while in transit, and shelter for the IMET and service equipment at the site. A sheltered work area, of at least 50 square feet with a table and chair, must be protected from excessive dust, free of standing water or condensation, and must be heated and/or cooled sufficiently to allow efficient operation of equipment. Power (120V AC) must be provided for the AMRS's electrical equipment, and priority telephone access during certain short periods each day must be made available.

The procedure for requesting IMETs will follow the guidelines outlined in the national MOA, the National Mobilization Guide, and the Southern Area Interagency Mobilization Guide. The following information will be provided to the requested IMET:

1. Name of fire.
2. Location of fire.
3. Directions to location where the IMET is to report and the location of ICP.

4. Name of Incident Commander, Plans Chief, and FBAN, if available.
5. Request and Resource Order number for IMET.

Upon arrival at the incident and after going through the appropriate check-in procedures, the IMET will:

1. Brief the Fire Behavior Analyst (FBAN), Planning Section Chief (PSC), and the Incident Commander (IC) on current and expected weather as it affects the fire.
2. Establish a schedule with the IC and the FBAN for written forecasts and formal briefings.
3. Request a briefing of the fire situation and potential behavior problems from the FBAN. As time and resources permit, incident management should arrange for an aerial inspection trip for the meteorologist and should provide the forecaster with current fireline maps. If possible, the IMET should be assigned a radio with the fireline frequency.
4. Arrange for a schedule of observations from key points around the fire and from nearby lookouts and fire danger stations, in cooperation with the FBAN and PSC. On large fires, some personnel (at least two) should be permanently assigned to this duty. On smaller fires, this information can be provided by Division Supervisors equipped with belt weather kits.

IMET duties will vary with incident management team requirements, but the IMET is expected to provide daily weather forecasts for the incident, participate in shift briefings, planning and strategy meeting, and coordinate daily with the local Weather Forecast Office (WFO) and /or other IMETs at nearby incidents.

Demobilization is initiated at the incident, and will be coordinated through the Tennessee Interagency Coordination Center. Upon release, the user agency will transport the ATMU and

Fire RAWS back to its cache location or to the controlling fire weather office. Travel arrangements will be made for the IMET back to his or her home office. The IMET is responsible for transporting the AMRS workstation back to the home office. If the AMRS unit resides at a different location than the IMET, the IMET must make arrangements to ship the equipment to the proper office, and charge any shipping cost to the fire.

Other Special Services

Other special services may include weather station visits by partner agency personnel, RAWS site surveys and inspections, weather observer training, and course development work or related program work. These activities would typically be at the full expense of the requesting agency unless other arrangements have been made.

NWS meteorologists may also be asked to assist in other non-routine services (e.g. briefings or coordination calls) during periods of high fire danger or fire occurrence. MICs and Fire Program Leaders are to ensure the natural resource agency needs are met with little expense to either agency.

Fire Weather Training

NWS meteorologists will be available to assist in user-oriented training. This includes fire behavior courses, such as S-190 and S-290, where the meteorologist will serve as part of the cadre for that course. Requests for training assistance should be made through the NWS office's Fire Weather Program Leader or Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC). Sufficient advance notice should be given to allow for scheduling and proper preparation. Costs incurred by the NWS in providing training assistance will be borne by the requesting agency.

Natural Resource Agency Responsibilities

Operational Support and Predictive Services

Program Management

The natural resource agencies will oversee the fire weather observation program, including the site selection and maintenance of the observing equipment, fire weather training of their personnel, and the proficiency of their personnel in the use of the NWS Spot software.

Monitoring, Feedback and Improvement

Natural resource agencies will monitor the quality and timeliness of NWS fire weather products, and provide feedback to the NWS in order to improve services to the agencies.

Technology Transfer

The natural resource agencies may, from time to time, advise the NWS of new technologies being implemented to monitor meteorological or fuel parameters, or to improve communication, coordination, training or reference. Natural resource agency personnel may, with prior arrangement, visit an NWS office to acquire a knowledge of NWS technologies used in the monitoring of weather, or the preparation of products.

Agency Computer Resources

Internet will be the primary method of obtaining the Fire Weather Forecast, Red Flag Warning, Fire Weather Watch, and for both requesting and receiving a Spot Forecast. As a

backup method, a request can be made to the NWS for a product to be faxed to the customer agency. NFDRS observations will be entered into WIMS, and forecasts and calculations based on these observations will be received by WIMS, or by internet via a WIMS website (found at <http://fam.nwccg.gov/fam-web/wims/jsp/default.htm>).

Fire Weather Observations

Fire weather observation stations provide the specialized weather observations for fire weather forecasts, wildfire control and suppression, and various other land management operations. These stations were selected very carefully in each state and federal district. Sites were chosen to represent homogeneous weather conditions across a district. Stations may either be manned sites operated by land management agencies, or unmanned Remote Automatic Weather Stations (RAWS) maintained by any of the federal or state land management agencies in the area.

The GACC in Atlanta, when requested to do so by a natural resource agency, shall assign a station ID number for fire weather observation platforms. The land management agency will provide the station name, location (county, latitude, and longitude), and elevation to the GACC meteorologist.

The GACC meteorologist will assign the number and assist the station owner in establishing a station catalog in WIMS. The numbering convention uses a six digit number starting with 40 (for TN), followed by a 2-digit county code, followed by a 2-digit station number. The GACC meteorologist is responsible for maintaining a database of RAWS stations in his area. This information concerning new RAWS stations should also be provided to the appropriate NWS forecast office.

RAWS stations are also assigned a character alphanumeric identifier based on satellite transmission time. The NESDIS ID, transmit channel, and time are assigned by the US Forest Service National RAWS program.

Observations from a satellite telemetered RAWS will automatically flow into WIMS via the NESDIS ID. Observations are only entered manually if the RAWS is a manual station. The RAWS owner currently must enter WIMS and manually change a recorded observation (an R ob) to an observed observation (an O ob), manually enter the state of the weather, and save the observation to WIMS. This action is generally applied only to the daily 1300 hour observation.

As a part of the ongoing reprogramming efforts in WIMS, the change from R to O will be completely automated and a State of the Weather (SOW) will be computed (in part) from solar radiation data. Manual daily entry in WIMS will no longer be necessary for satellite telemetered stations. If a station is not satellite telemetered, the entire 1300 hour observation must be manually entered into WIMS. Non-NFDRS stations are naturally exempt from these procedures.

Even with automated conversion to O type observations, the responsibility still rests with the RAWS owner to ensure that observations are being transmitted, recorded, and archived properly in WIMS. The additional automation will greatly simplify the daily process, however there will still be the need for observations to be checked for integrity and consistency. Managing the NFDRS model parameters will still be a manual process in WIMS. Automation of O type observations will help streamline the WIMS collective that is distributed to the NWS via AWIPS. NFDRS forecasts are based on RAWS observations that appear on the daily collective.

Sensor failure will often result in erroneous or (at best) suspicious values. If the NWS becomes aware of such a situation, it is prudent to contact the station owner. Similarly, if a station owner becomes aware of a sensor failure, he should relay that information to the appropriate NWS office. It is that station owner's responsibility to make sure that their station is and remains in good working order and that repairs are made in a timely manner. Owners of NFDRS stations can still (and should) correct any errors in their respective observations.

On - Site Support

The user agencies are also responsible for maintaining observation site equipment. NWS personnel may accompany the user on maintenance trips or for annual inspection visits, which could also serve as liaison with the users.

Training

The responsibility of training natural resource agency employees will be that of the agencies themselves. However, the NWS will be available to assist when requested to do so. Any expenses incurred by the NWS will normally be charged to the user agency, unless other arrangements have been made.

Joint Responsibilities

Meetings between the NWS offices and the natural resource agencies

The U.S.F.S. Cherokee National Forest fire section facilitates the Tennessee Fire Co-operators meeting held at least twice per year (in late spring and late fall) with all natural resource agencies and NWS offices serving Tennessee invited to attend. These meetings typically will be held in east Tennessee, to minimize travel distance. Although the agenda includes many internal division matters they are of interagency consequence. Therefore, the NWS is a Strategic Partner and is invited to these meetings since topics often include NWS operations.

Maintenance and Revision of the Annual Operating Plan

The AOP should be revised each year by the end of January, with cooperation and participation from each NWS office and each natural resource agency. The state liaison office (Morristown - MRX) will be custodian of the plan.

Notification of NWS Changes in Operating Procedures

From time to time, NWS headquarters, or NWS Southern Region Headquarters, will send draft versions of future directives to their forecast offices for review and comment. To ensure that the natural resource partner agencies have an opportunity to review and comment on proposed changes, the NWS office in Morristown will forward a copy of draft directives to the land management agencies in Tennessee when they are received. Comments and suggestions can be forwarded to the NWS office in Morristown, which will forward them to NWS Southern Region Headquarters.

Agreements on Services Provided

Agreements on services and standards are normally reached at statewide meetings, but may be achieved by a series of local meetings or by other means such as telephone or e-mail. NWS offices and land managers should be aware of the ripple effect an agreement might have on other NWS offices and their customers, particularly when service areas cross state lines.

Fire Weather/Fire Prevention Awareness Week

Annually during the National Fire Prevention Week (the first Sunday in October through the following Saturday), the NWS and cooperating fire agencies will provide fire safety and prevention information to the public, as well as information concerning how weather affects fire behavior. The NWS will send daily "Public Information Statements" over their communications systems during this week. The Tennessee Division of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service will provide guidance and additional information that is appropriate for the season for these statements. The intent is to raise public awareness of how weather affects fire behavior, the need for using safe burning techniques, and how to prevent wildfires from occurring in Tennessee.

Workplace Visits

Natural resource agencies and the NWS collaborate on familiarization of personnel in each other's fields of expertise, operations, and equipment. Visits to offices and work centers, as well as field job sites, can meet part of these requirements.

Service Evaluation

Services provided by the NWS, and delivery of observations and information from the natural resource agencies to the NWS in support of these services, shall be under constant evaluation by both parties.

Effective Dates of the Operating Plan

The effective dates of this Annual Operating Plan will be from January 1 through December 31 of the current calendar year. This plan will be subject to review and revision by all signatory parties each year, or more frequently as operations warrant.

This plan will be available on the WFO fire weather webpages. A copy of this plan will be sent to NWS Southern Region Headquarters by January 31 of the current year. Southern Region Headquarters will forward a copy of the plan to NIFC and NWS Headquarters.

Signatory Page

The following signatories have agreed to the terms and conditions of this Annual Operating Plan, which is subject to revision on a least an annual basis, or more frequently as operations necessitate. Actual signatures are maintained on file.

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

John Kirksey
Resource Protection Unit Leader
Tennessee Division of Forestry

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

Mark Taylor
Fire Management Officer
Great Smoky Mountains National Park
USDI National Park Service

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

Marty Bentley
Fire Management Officer
Cherokee National Forest
USDA Forest Service

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

Frank Graham
Chief Ranger
Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
USDI National Park Service

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

Denver Ingram
Predictive Services Program Manager
Southern Area Coordination Center

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

David Gaffin
Fire Weather Program Leader
NWS Morristown, TN

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

John Cohen
Fire Weather Program Leader
NWS Nashville, TN

_____/signed/_____ 1/31/10

Michael Scotten
Fire Weather Program Leader
NWS Memphis, TN

Appendices

Fire Weather Zone Maps

Fire weather zones consist of groups of counties (or occasionally single counties) selected based on homogeneous climatology and expected weather. These groupings may change from forecast issuance to forecast issuance, and may contain counties from adjacent states served by the same NWS office. For a map of the TN fire weather forecast zones, go to

http://www.weather.gov/mirs/public/prods/maps/map_images/state-maps/fire-zones/tn_firezone.pdf.

Observation Stations

RAWS = Remote Automatic Weather Station (forestry maintenance)

ASOS = Automated Surface Observation Station (NWS maintenance)

AWOS = Automated Weather Observation Station (FAA maintenance)

Station Name; County; Type; ID or Number; Latitude; Longitude; Elevation

Cherokee National Forest

Mountain City - Johnson County Airport; Johnson; AWOS; 6A4; 36⁰ 25' N; 81⁰ 51' W; 2241'

Nolichucky; Greene; RAWS; 403602; 35.982 N; 82.843 W; 2300'

Tellico; Monroe; RAWS; 407502; 35.2800 N; 84.2750 W; 1700'

Watauga; Unicoi/Washington; RAWS; 403604; 36.201 N; 82.389 W; 2880'

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Indian Grave; Blount; RAWS; 407603; 35.6236 N; 83.8083 W; 2700'

East Tennessee District (East)

Elizabethton - Municipal Airport; Carter; AWOS; 0A9; 36⁰ 22' N; 82⁰ 10' W; 1584'
Greeneville - Greene County Municipal Airport; Greene; AWOS; GCY; 36⁰ 12' N; 82⁰ 49' W; 1608'
Hamblen County Headquarters; Hamblen; RAWS; 403301; 36.2572 N; 83.2772 W; 1163'
Jefferson County Tower; Jefferson; RAWS; 401302; 36.0703 N; 83.4886 W; 1750'
Morristown - Moore-Murrell Airport; Hamblen; AWOS; MOR; 36⁰ 11' N; 83⁰ 23' W; 1313'
Tri-Cities Regional Airport; Sullivan; ASOS; TRI; 36⁰ 28' N; 82⁰ 24' W; 1500'

East Tennessee District (West)

Big South Fork National Recreation Area; Scott; RAWS; 400902; 36.4750 N; 84.6542 W; 1445'
Chuck Swan State Forest; Union; RAWS; 403101; 36.3689 N; 83.8986 W; 1657'
Jacksboro - Campbell County Airport; Campbell; AWOS; JAU; 36⁰ 20' N; 84⁰ 10' W; 1180'
Knoxville - Downtown Island Airport; Knox; AWOS; DKX; 35⁰ 58' N; 83⁰ 52' W; 833'
Knoxville McGhee Tyson Airport; Blount; ASOS; TYS; 35⁰ 49' N; 83⁰ 59' W; 962'
Lenoir City; Loudon; RAWS; 405101; 35.8442 N; 84.3317 W; 1240'
Oak Ridge; Anderson; ASOS; OQT; 36⁰ 01' N; 84⁰ 14' W; 910'
Oneida - Scott County Municipal Airport; Scott; AWOS; SCX; 36⁰ 27' N; 84⁰ 35' W; 1542'
Sevierville - Gatlinburg-Pigeon Forge Airport; Sevier; AWOS; GKT; 35⁰ 52' N; 83⁰ 32' W; 1020'

Cumberland District (South)

Athens - McMinn County Airport; McMinn; AWOS; MMI; 35⁰ 24' N; 84⁰ 34' W; 858'
Bledsoe State Forest; Bledsoe; RAWS; 407102; 35.6819 N; 85.2733 W; 1780'
Chattanooga Lovell Field Airport; Hamilton; ASOS; CHA; 35⁰ 02' N; 85⁰ 12' W; 689'
Dayton - Mark Anton Airport; Rhea; AWOS; 2A0; 35⁰ 29' N; 84⁰ 56' W; 715'
Meigs EOC; Meigs; RAWS; 407301; 35.5208 N; 84.7931 W; 760'
Prentice Cooper State Forest; Marion; RAWS; 409201; 35.1303 N; 85.4278 W; 1920'
Tullahoma - Tullahoma Regional Airport; Coffee; AWOS; THA; 35⁰ 23' N; 86⁰ 15' W; 1082'
Winchester - Municipal Airport; Franklin; AWOS; BGF; 35⁰ 11' N; 86⁰ 04' W; 979'

Cumberland District (North)

Crossville Area Office; Cumberland; RAWS; 405001; 35.9178 N; 84.9972 W; 1770'

Crossville Memorial Airport; Cumberland; ASOS; CSV; 35⁰ 57' N; 85⁰ 05' W; 1867'

Lafayette Work Center; Macon; RAWS; 400501; 36.5411 N; 86.0028 W; 970'

Livingston - Municipal Airport; Overton; AWOS; 8A3; 36⁰ 25' N; 85⁰ 19' W; 1370'

McMinnville - Warren County Municipal Airport; Warren; AWOS; RNC; 35⁰ 42' N; 85⁰ 51' W; 1032'

Sparta - Upper Cumberland Regional Airport; White; AWOS; SRB; 36⁰ 03' N; 85⁰ 32' W; 1025'

Highland Rim District

Burns; Dickson; RAWS; 402102; 36.0650 N; 87.2831 W; 706'

Clarksville Outlaw Airport; Montgomery; ASOS; CKV; 36⁰ 37' N; 87⁰ 25' W; 560'

Columbia - Maury County Regional Airport; Maury; AWOS; MRC; 35⁰ 33' N; 87⁰ 11' W; 681'

Dickson - Municipal Airport; Dickson; AWOS; M02; 36⁰ 08' N; 87⁰ 26' W; 891'

Fayetteville - Municipal Airport; Lincoln; AWOS; FYM; 35⁰ 04' N; 86⁰ 34' W; 983'

Fort Campbell; Montgomery; RAWS; 400201; 36.6256 N; 87.5369 W; 545'

Gallatin - Sumner County Regional Airport; Sumner; AWOS; M33; 36⁰ 23' N; 86⁰ 25' W; 584'

Lawrenceburg - Lawrence County Airport; Lawrence; AWOS; 2M2; 35⁰ 14' N; 87⁰ 15' W; 936'

Lebanon - Municipal Airport; Wilson; AWOS; M54; 36⁰ 12' N; 86⁰ 19' W; 571'

Lewisburg Tower; Marshall; RAWS; 406601; 35.3817 N; 86.7658 W; 1150'

Lewisburg - Ellington Airport; Marshall; AWOS; LUG; 35⁰ 30' N; 86⁰ 48' W; 707'

Meriwether Lewis; Lewis; RAWS; 406401; 35.5025 N; 87.4581 W; 920'

Murfreesboro - Municipal Airport; Rutherford; AWOS; MBT; 35⁰ 53' N; 86⁰ 23' W; 615'

Nashville International Airport; Davidson; ASOS; BNA; 36⁰ 08' N; 86⁰ 41' W; 600'

Nashville - John Tune Airport; Davidson; AWOS; JWN; 36⁰ 11' N; 86⁰ 53' W; 494'

Portland - Municipal Airport; Sumner; AWOS; 1M5; 36⁰ 36' N; 86⁰ 29' W; 818'

Pulaski - Abernathy Field; Giles; AWOS; GZS; 35⁰ 09' N; 87⁰ 04' W; 689'

Savannah - Hardin County Airport; Hardin; AWOS; SNH; 35⁰ 10' N; 88⁰ 13' W; 473'

Shelbyville - Bomar Field; Bedford; AWOS; SYI; 35° 34' N; 86° 27' W; 802'
Shiloh National Military Park; Hardin; RAWS; 408302; 35.1550 N; 88.3217 W; 420'
Springfield - Robertson County Airport; Robertson; AWOS; M91; 36° 32' N; 86° 55' W; 708'

West Tennessee District

Beech River Regional Airport; Henderson; AWOS; PVE; 35° 39.551' N; 88° 11.581' W; 488'
Bolivar - William Whitehurst Field; Hardeman; AWOS; M08; 35° 13' N; 89° 03' W; 499'
Camden Tower; Benton; RAWS; 404001; 36.0661 N; 88.1686 W; 512'
Chickasaw State Forest; Hardeman; RAWS; 408001; 35.3725 N; 88.8292 W; 496'
Covington - Municipal Airport; Tipton; AWOS; M04; 35° 35' N; 89° 35' W; 280'
Dyersburg Regional Airport; Dyer; AWOS; DYR; 36° 00' N; 89° 24' W; 338'
Dyersburg; Dyer; RAWS; 403801; 35° 59.717' N; 89° 24.350' W; 208'
Huntingdon - Carroll County Airport; Carroll; AWOS; HZD; 36° 05' N; 88° 28' W; 497'
Jackson McKellar - Sipes Regional Airport; Madison; ASOS; MKL; 35° 36' N; 88° 55' W; 433'
Memphis International Airport; Shelby; ASOS; MEM; 35° 03' N; 89° 59' W; 254'
Millington Regional Jetport; Shelby; AWOS; NQA; 35° 21' N; 89° 52' W; 320'
Paris - Henry County Airport; Henry; AWOS; PHT; 36° 20' N; 88° 23' W; 580'
Selmer - Robert Sibley Airport; McNairy; AWOS; SZY; 35° 12' N; 88° 30' W; 610'
Somerville - Fayette County Airport; Fayette; AWOS; FYE; 35° 12' N; 89° 24' W; 436'
Union City - Everett-Stewart Regional Airport; Obion; AWOS; UCY; 36° 23' N; 88° 59' W; 342'

NOAA Weather Radio Transmitters Serving Tennessee Counties

For a map of each transmitter reception area, go to <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/stations.php?State=TN>.

Location; NWS Office; Call Sign; Frequency; TN Counties Served

Beechgrove, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WXK-63; 162.475 MHz; Bedford, Cannon, Coffee,
Franklin, Marshall, Moore, Rutherford, Warren, Williamson and Wilson

Blue Ridge, GA; Atlanta, GA (FFC); KXI-75; 162.475 MHz; Polk

Booneville, MS; Memphis, TN (MEG); KIH-53; 162.400 MHz; Hardeman, Hardin, and McNairy

Bristol, TN; Morristown, TN (MRX); WXX-47; 162.550 MHz; Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington

Centerville, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); KWN-53; 162.450 MHz; Hickman and Lewis

Chattanooga, TN; Morristown, TN (MRX); WXX-48; 162.550 MHz; Bledsoe, Bradley, Hamilton, McMinn, Marion, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, and Sequatchie

Clarksville, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WWH-37; 162.500 MHz; Montgomery

Clifton, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WZ-2506; 162.500 MHz; Decatur, Hardin, McNairy, Perry, and Wayne

Cookeville, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WXX-61; 162.400 MHz; Cumberland, Fentress, Jackson, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, and White

Dyersburg, TN; Memphis, TN (MEG); WWH-30; 162.500 MHz; Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Haywood, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, and Weakley

Hickman, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WXN-74; 162.500 MHz; DeKalb, Jackson, Putnam, Smith, Trousdale, and Wilson

Huntsville, AL; Huntsville, AL (HUN); KIH-20; 162.400 MHz; Lincoln

Jackson, TN; Memphis, TN (MEG); W XK-60; 162.550 MHz; Carroll, Chester, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McNairy, and Weakley

Knoxville, TN; Morristown, TN (MRX); W XK-46; 162.475 MHz; Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union

La Follette, TN; Morristown, TN (MRX); W NG-732; 162.450 MHz; Anderson, Campbell, Claiborne, Morgan, Scott, and Union

Lafayette, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); W NG-631; 162.525 MHz; Clay, Jackson, Macon, Smith, Sumner, Trousdale, and Wilson

Lawrenceburg, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); W WF-84; 162.425 MHz; Giles, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, and Wayne

Lobelville, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); K WN-52; 162.525 MHz; Benton, Decatur, Henderson, Hickman, Humphreys, Lewis, and Perry

Mayfield, KY; Paducah, KY (PAH); K IH-46; 162.475 MHz; Henry and Weakley

Memphis, TN; Memphis, TN (MEG); W XK-49; 162.475 MHz; Fayette, Hardeman, Haywood, Lauderdale, Shelby, and Tipton

Nashville, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); K IG-79; 162.550 MHz; Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson

Spencer, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); W NG-629; 162.450 MHz; Bledsoe, Cumberland, DeKalb, Putnam, Van Buren, Warren, and White

Vale, TN; Memphis, TN (MEG); KHA-46; 162.450 MHz; Benton, Carroll, Henry, and Weakley

Waverly, TN; Nashville, TN (OHX); WXX-62; 162.400 MHz; Benton, Dickson, Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Perry, and Stewart

Winchester, TN; Huntsville, AL (HUN); WNG-554; 162.525 MHz; Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Grundy, Lincoln, and Moore

Red Flag Criteria

A Red Flag Warning is issued when forecast conditions (high winds and low humidity), together with existing environmental conditions (extended dry periods), could result in extreme fire behavior within 24 hours. A Fire Weather Watch will be issued if Red Flag Warning conditions are possible in the next 24 to 48 hours. NWS forecasters will first coordinate the issuance of a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch with the associated land management agency after determining that fuels are dry enough for fire danger concerns. A highlight of the Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch should be included within the routine fire weather forecast.

Meteorological conditions which warrant the issuance of a Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch in Tennessee are the following:

1. Strong winds with low humidity, generally 18 mph or higher sustained wind speeds with less than 25 percent relative humidity.
2. Rainfall of less than 0.25 inch during the past two days.

Fire Weather Product Examples

Morristown, TN (MRX):

Red Flag Warning (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MRX/RFWMRX>)

Fire Weather Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MRX/FWFMRX>)

Spot Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MRX/FWSMRX>)

Nashville, TN (OHX):

Red Flag Warning (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/OHX/RFWOHX>)

Fire Weather Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/OHX/FWFOHX>)

Spot Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/OHX/FWSOHX>)

Memphis, TN (MEG):

Red Flag Warning (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MEG/RFWMEG>)

Fire Weather Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MEG/FWFMEG>)

Spot Forecast (found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/MEG/FWSMEG>)

FWF Update Criteria

The Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) will be updated when the expected weather changes significantly from what was predicted in the routine forecast. The decision to issue a fire weather update will be based on the effect the weather change has on the fire behavior and the level of fire danger in the state. An update may be issued at any time of day and using the following guidelines:

1. If precipitation was not mentioned in the previous forecast and looks likely, or if it was forecast as being predominant and now looks as if it will not occur or remain isolated, an update should be issued.

2. An update should be considered when a front and its associated wind shift is much delayed or arrives sooner than expected.

3. An update should be considered whenever the wind speed is much stronger or lighter than previously expected. Differences of 10 to 15 mph in most cases are significant and may also apply to gustiness. If the wind direction differs by two or more compass points (more than 45 degrees), an update may be needed if the prevailing wind speed is 15 mph or more.

4. When relative humidity drops to very low levels (30 percent or less) and differs by more than 15 percent from the morning forecast, an update should be considered. Also, if the relative humidity remains high and low levels had been previously forecast, an updated should be considered.