

# Say Hello to NOAA Weather Radio (NWR)



## Facts About NOAA Weather Radio

NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts NOAA's National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and non-weather hazard information 24 hours a day.

Weather radios equipped with a special alarm tone feature can sound an alert and give immediate information about a life-threatening situation.

SAME (Specific Area Message Encoding) technology lets listeners pre-select the NOAA's National Weather Service and non-weather alerts they want to receive, based on the county where they live.

Broadcast range from a NOAA Weather Radio transmitter is approximately 40 miles.

The hearing and visually impaired can receive alerts by connecting weather radios with the appropriate plug in to other kinds of attention-getting devices, such as strobe lights, pagers, bedshakers, personal computers and text printers.

On October 1, 2002, there were more than 760 NOAA Weather Radio stations in the 50 states and near adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and U.S. Pacific Territories.

NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts watches when conditions are favorable for severe weather, and warnings when severe weather is imminent or occurring.

## NOAA Weather Radio (NWR)

**NOAA Weather Radio (NWR)** is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting National Weather Service (NWS) warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day.

Working with the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Emergency Alert System, NWR is an "all hazards" radio network, making it your single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information. NWR broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards—both natural (such as earthquakes

and volcano activity) and environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills).

Known as the "Voice of NOAA's National Weather Service," NWR is provided as a public service by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), part of the Department of Commerce. As of October 1, 2002, NWR includes more than 760 transmitters, covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories. NWR requires a special radio receiver or scanner capable of picking up the signal.

NOAA Weather Radio receivers can be purchased at many retail stores and through mail order catalogues and Internet web sites that sell electronic merchandise. They are often available at boat and marine accessory outlets. Broadcasts are found in the public service band at 7 frequencies .

NWR service depends on reliable signal reception, typically a 40 mile radius from the transmitter, assuming level terrain. Some counties, especially in mountainous areas, may not have reliable reception due to signal blockages or excessive distance from the transmitter.

NWR Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) receivers employ digital coding to automatically activate for specific weather or emergency conditions in specific areas (typically a county or portion of a county). You program SAME receivers for the county(s) and types of products you require. Your receiver will then automatically alert you only of weather and other emergencies in areas you programmed. SAME county code numbers are available by telephone, 1-888-NWR-SAME (1-888-697-7263), or website, <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/indexnw.htm>

Your NWR receiver manufacturer instructions will describe how to select for particular types of products. Television, cable and radio stations can use SAME to allow their listeners to hear warnings as they are issued. Less sophisticated NWR receivers are equipped with the warning alarm or tone alert feature. These receivers will either sound an alarm, or when operated in mute mode, will automatically turn the volume on so the warning message may be heard.

*New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma are in NOAA's Southern Region. Arizona is in the Western Region and Colorado is in the Central Region. For maps and a broadcast frequency/power list see:*

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrrcvr.htm>



### NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) Terms

A **Warning** is issued when the specific hazard is a significant threat to public safety and/or property, probability of occurrence and certainty of location is high, and the onset time is relatively short.

A **Watch** means conditions are favorable for the hazard but either the start time, probability of occurrence or location is uncertain. Stay alert and tuned to local radio, TV, or NWR.

An **Emergency** refers to an event that by itself would not kill, injure or do property damage but indirectly may lead to other things that could result in a hazard.

**New Mexico** falls under NOAA’s **Southern Region** along with Texas and Oklahoma. *Colorado* is in the *Central Region* and *Arizona* is in the *Western Region*.

Warnings, watches, and statements that may activate the **NWR SAME** system include, but are not limited to, the following products:

#### Weather Hazards

Tornado Warning	Tornado Watch
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	Severe Thunderstorm Watch
Flood and Flash Flood Warning	Flood and Flash Flood Watch*
Severe Weather Statement	Flash Flood Statement*
Special Marine Warning*	Winter Storm Warning*
Hurricane Warning	Hurricane Statement*
Tropical Storm Warning	Tropical Storm Watch

#### Hazards Relayed from Local Authorities

Avalanche Watch*	Avalanche Warning
Child Abduction Emergency	Civil Danger Warning
Civil Emergency Message	Law Enforcement Warning
Evacuation Immediate	Shelter in Place Warning
Hazardous Materials Warning	911 Telephone Outage Emergency
Nuclear Power Plant Warning	Radiological Hazard Warning

\***NWR SAME** activation determined by local needs.