

IWT Workshop Notes  
December 5th, 2023

- Email formatting issues:
  - About 15-20 reported formatting issues with the partner email.
  - Outlook appears to be the only email platform with issues.
    - Are there issues with Outlook Exchange, Outlook from Teams, or both?
- Alicia's presentation on winter weather topics/reminders:
  - Individual jurisdictions notify TDEM when they open warming/cooling shelters and provide information about the shelters.
  - This information is populated on an interactive GIS map: [tdem.texas.gov/warm](http://tdem.texas.gov/warm).
  - Results from IWT registration questionnaire:
    - Temperature triggers for decision-making:
      - 32 degrees is the most common temperature threshold.
      - Secondary clusters near 20-28 degrees.
    - Travel is the greatest consideration for decision-making and actions during winter weather events.
      - Second is sheltering/warming shelters.
  - Comments:
    - There is some struggle with regional coordination with the information the NWS provides.
      - Is there any way for TDEM to facilitate regional coordination calls during winter weather events?
    - Don't underestimate the impact of freezing fog. It can (and has) caused significant impacts.
    - A 28 degree wind chill is an important threshold regardless of actual temperature.
    - The NWS should ensure to highlight any expected temperature fluctuations, including the timing of the fluctuations.
  - Probabilistic Messaging:
    - What does forecast confidence mean to you?
      - Superintendents and ISD officials ask about confidence for school closings. ISD EMs base confidence off of NWS confidence.
    - Thoughts about the red swath on probabilistic rainfall graphics (the one where NWS highlighted 30% chance area of higher impacts):

- Red is often associated with tornado warnings, not probabilities.
  - NWS's goal is for the red to sound off alarms that impacts are expected within the highlighted region.
- Range forecasts, particularly for snowfall forecasts, are favored.
- One EM asked how often events fall outside of the "goal posts." They pointed out the NWS thinks about what is most *probable*, but EMs consider what is most *possible*.
- Warning Polygons:
  - There is a strong desire for more graphics to be posted in NWSChat that highlight the area of concern in the near-term.
    - Could simply be circling an area on a map and posting it in NWSChat.
    - This could reduce stress and confusion for EMs trying to interpret radar and warning polygons.
    - Is there a way the NWS can make this a quick and easy process?
- NWSChat Feedback:
  - It is extremely beneficial anytime the NWS can graphically show/communicate information.
    - Many request more graphics in chat from NWS.
  - Broadcast media comments:
    - Since reports are often preliminary, careful language is used when relaying reports on live TV.
    - More information and reports in NWSChat are better.
    - Having the ability to send pictures through NWSChat is great, but they often bog down the chat. Some broadcast meteorologists are reading reports real-time while live. If pictures start stacking up, they could miss something important.
      - If you have multiple pictures to share through NWSChat, try sending multiple pictures in a thread.
      - Avoid sending unnecessary reports/pictures (e.g. small tree limbs).
    - Avoid burying updates and replies in threads because they are often missed.
      - Especially if you're relaying important information during an ongoing event. Broadcast meteorologists will probably miss buried information.

- Like to know which jurisdictions are sounding sirens and why so they can relay that information to the public.
  - Can storm motion (speed and direction) be added to the warning text when it goes through NWSChat?
- The live radar in NWSChat 1.0 is missed. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like it's going to return in NWSChat 2.0.
- NWS continues to push for highlighted text in NWSChat 2.0, but there is no word on whether Slack will eventually add this feature.
- Positive feedback for NWSChat 2.0:
  - Love the versatility of the platform and the ability to easily sign into NWSChat on any device.
  - Datafeed channel is working well.
- Comments about storm reports in NWSChat:
  - Some jurisdictions relay wind speeds from OWS sites (if they are worth reporting).
    - This can help other jurisdictions downstream while also giving the NWS ground-truth reports.
  - Some jurisdictions relay any major weather-related traffic incidents reported by police/fire.
    - This is useful for NWS situational awareness.
    - Also helps downstream jurisdictions, especially in the case of wind overturning 18-wheelers.
  - Many jurisdictions heavily rely on upstream reports.
- Don't be afraid to send any social media links to storm reports through NWSChat (but, as always, use good judgment).