



National Weather Service

National Weather Service

Fall 2007 Issue



www.weather.gov/charlestonwv

The Central Appalachian & Middle Ohio Valley Weather Review

Lawrence County KY StormReady

With the visit of Jeff Pack, Director of 9-1-1 Communications, to our office, Lawrence County Kentucky completed the necessary steps to become recognized as StormReady by the National Weather Service. This brings the number of StormReady counties in the area we cover to 5.

Lawrence County was officially recognized on October 4th. A ceremony is planned for November 16th at 10 AM at the county courthouse.

Drought Continues...Fire Danger Increases by Mark Pellerito

More than 8,000 fires blazed in the combined four states of Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia during the infamous Fall Fire Season of 1987. In West Virginia alone, more than 400,000 acres of forest burned, mostly during an 11 day stretch from October 30 through November 9. 97% of those charred acres could be found in the 10 southern WV counties of Mingo, Logan, Wayne, Boone, Lincoln, Kanawha, Fayette, Raleigh, Wyoming, and McDowell. Mingo was by far the worst, with 53% of its forest burned!

When comparing rainfall and temperature statistics this season with 1987 across southern areas, we find that:

- Only 60% of normal rainfall fell in May-Sept. 2007, compared to the 81% of normal that fell in 1987.
- Rainfall deficit compared to normal for May-Sept. 2007 was more than 8 inches; more than double 1987's deficit.
- Temperatures were 2 to 3 degrees warmer than normal both in 1987 and 2007.

The Charleston National Weather Service office will be working closely with our partners in other agencies to monitor the situation throughout the rest of the Fall season. Upon request, we issue SPOT forecasts specific to the exact locations of wildfires, and tailored to the needs of our fire weather customers.

Inside this issue:

Lawrence County StormReady	1
Drought	1
Winter Outlook	2
Spotter Training	2
Winter Weather Awareness	2
Co-Op Corner	3
Retirement	3
Drought	4
StormReady	5
Drought	5

Dates of Interest:

- Oct. 20 Bridge Day, Fayetteville WV
- Nov. 11-17 Winter Weather Awareness Week in Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia.
- Nov. 16 10 AM Lawrence County Kentucky Storm-Ready ceremony
- Dec. 2-8 Winter Weather Awareness Week in Virginia
- Dec. 11 7 PM Advanced Spotter Training Jackson OH
- Dec. 21 7:22 PM Winter Begins

Crown fire near Chatham, VA on September 12, which injured three people.

Photo: Dennis McCarthy, Virginia Dept. of Forestry

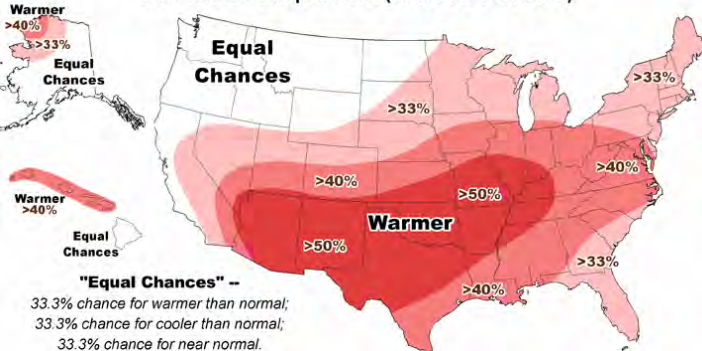


Winter Outlook December-February



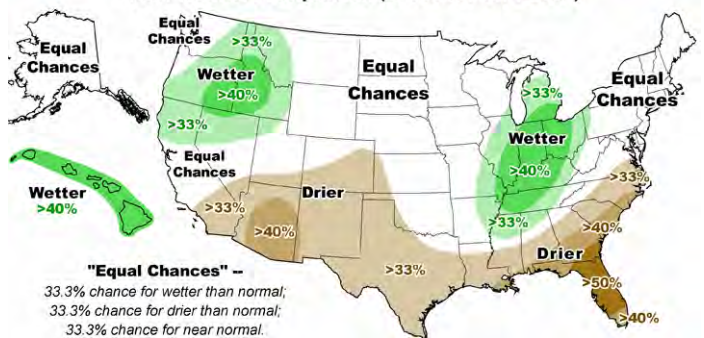
Temperature Outlook December 2007 - February 2008

Chances for **Cooler Than Normal**, **Warmer Than Normal**, or **Near Normal** Temperatures (based on 1971-2000)



Precipitation Outlook December 2007 - February 2008

Chances for **Wetter Than Normal**, **Drier Than Normal**, or **Near Normal** Precipitation (based on 1971-2000)



Spotter Training

Check our web site for updated training information. We offer the basic class, a 2-hour introduction to storm spotting and reporting. A step up from that would be the Advanced course which is approximately 1 1/2 hours in length. We are also looking for any interesting weather pictures you have which you think would be good to

include in the spotter training program. The proper credit would be given. Pictures should be in an electronic form and less than 2 MB in size. They can be e-mailed to daniel.bartholf@noaa.gov.
● December 11, 7 PM Advanced Spotter Training, Jackson OH.



"Spotters are the eyes of the National Weather Service"

Winter Weather Awareness Weeks

It's that time of year...leaves are changing colors and falling to the ground. The air is noticeably chilly early in the morning. It can only mean one thing: Winter is fast approaching. While the season officially begins at the Winter Solstice on Dec. 21 at 7:22 PM, meteorological winter (the three coldest months) encompasses December through February.

To help prepare citizens for winter, the 4 states that we cover in our area of responsibility are all having Winter Weather Awareness Weeks. November 11-17 marks the West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky awareness weeks. Virginia's is December 2-8.

Weather offices that cover these 4 states will be distributing and disseminating information about winter storms and how you can prepare yourself. A good place to start for information is the following website:
<http://www.weather.gov/om/winter/index.shtml>

The following is a short refresher on thresholds we have for the issuance of winter weather advisories and warnings.

Winter Storm Warning: Any combination of snow, accretion of freezing rain and/or sleet is forecast.

Heavy Snow Warning: 6" of snow accumulation is forecast in a 24 hour period or less. 5" of snow in less than 12 hrs.

Ice Storm Warning: Quarter of an inch or more accretion of freezing rain is forecast.

Wind Chill Warning: Wind chills $\leq -25^\circ$ F expected to last 3 hours or more with wind speeds ≥ 5 mph.

Blizzard Warning: Sustained or frequent gusts ≥ 35 mph and considerable blowing and drifting snow reducing visibility to less than a quarter of a mile.

Snow Advisory: $\geq 3"$ to $\leq 5"$ snow is forecast in 12 hrs or less.

Co-Op Corner

Congratulations! 15-25-35 Year



Mrs. Sharon Hilton at Richwood
15 year service award



Patrick Fluty at Dunlow WV, 25 year
service award.



Mr. Fankell at Grayson KY 35
year service award

Paul Gilkerson Retires



Paul Gilkerson, a native West Virginian from near West Hamlin, will be retiring from the National Weather Service November 1, 2007, after serving the citizens of West Virginia for 36 years.

Paul began his Weather Service career in 1974 at the forecast office in Charleston after serving with the U.S Air Force. Paul was selected to perform two important functions. First, he was part of the unit which retrieved and adjusted data from the atmosphere both near and above the ground used to drive the national computer models as well as the important techniques used to forecast air quality in the Kanawha Valley. In addition, Paul served as a communications specialist who, during severe weather, was a key link between the severe weather forecaster and citizens of West Virginia.

In 1979, Paul transferred to the weather office in Elkins. Paul became part of a small team of 4 which served the citizens in northern West Virginia 24 hours a day for 17 years. In addition to providing a general forecast service, he played an integral role in setting up information and data networks in northern West Virginia which were used to dramatically improve flood forecasting services in that part of the state. In 1986, Paul was a key member of a group of Weather Service employees in West Virginia recognized with the Department Of Commerce silver medal for their meritorious service during the 1985 record breaking floods. This was in

recognition of the long hours and numerous actions taken to serve the citizens of West Virginia and save lives during this devastating flood event.

When the Weather Service reorganized in 1996 and the smaller offices, including Elkins, were closed, Paul had the opportunity to move out of the state and into higher positions within the NWS. However, his mountaineer heart brought him back to the forecast office in Charleston so he could continue to serve in West Virginia.

In addition to continuing to serve as a critical member of the severe weather warning team that served the citizens, Paul became part of the elite team of three which works intimately with the special volunteer observers scattered across the state serving as part of the back bone of the national climatological network. West Virginia has one of the larger networks in the country and has been recognized as one of the best operating. For his work with this network, the service he has provided during severe weather episodes and the leadership he has shown during the technology changes of the last 10 years, Paul has been recognized by the National Weather Service 9 times with special act awards.

Paul will be living in retirement in Elkins with his wife Sherry. The citizens of West Virginia will be losing a great public servant November 1, 2007.



Drought Conditions Spreads North & East by Ken Batty and John Sikora

The area has been void of rain since the last week in September. Temperatures have been hotter than normal. This has resulted in the drought conditions expanding north and east.

The extreme drought conditions (d3) indicated by the drought monitor of October 10th (see page 5)...showed that the drought area has expanded to include all of northeast Kentucky. This includes the Big and Little Sandy rivers...and the Tug Fork River in eastern Kentucky.

The extreme drought also included southern most Ohio, southwest Virginia and the extreme southwestern counties of West Virginia. In extreme southwestern West Virginia...this included the Tug Fork and portions of the Guyandotte River basins.

Likewise...the severe drought conditions (d2) has also expanded northeast...to areas up the Ohio River Valley around Pomeroy...Ravenswood...and Ripley...plus as far east in West Virginia as Kanawha County and the Charleston vicinity...plus Raleigh County.

Counties around Clarksburg and Elkins are not nearly as dry...as those further to the south.

Average rainfall deficits in the severe drought (d2) area are 4 to 6 inches below normal rainfall over the last 3 months. In the extreme drought areas (d3) rainfall is averaging 6 to 9 inches below normal since July. For the last six months those areas are running 6 to 10 inches below normal in the (d2) areas and 10 to 14 inches below normal in the (d3) areas.

There are five major climate stations in the area of concern: Parkersburg...Huntington...Charleston...Beckley and Elkins airports. Out of the five...four are running deficits since January 1. The only station near normal is Elkins.

The table shows the rainfall through Wednesday October 10th and departures from normal.

The national drought mitigation center monitors and detects droughts across the

Station	Since Jan. 1st	Departure From Normal	Normal value through Oct. 10
Parkersburg	21.00	-12.58	33.58
Huntington	21.35	-12.26	33.61
Charleston	25.11	-10.07	35.18
Beckley	29.08	-4.77	38.07
Elkins	36.89	-0.70	37.59

All values in inches.

nation. The drought monitor represents a consensus of federal...state and academic scientists. Each week...the drought monitor issues a nationwide updated drought intensity map. With this week's update of the drought monitor...areas mainly along the Ohio River... Big and Little Sandy rivers in eastern Kentucky... a small area in southeast Ohio along the Ohio and areas in the southwest portion of West Virginia and southwest Virginia along the Ohio...Big Sandy and Tug Fork rivers have now been categorized as having extreme drought conditions...or d3 on the drought monitor intensity scale. This scale ranges from d0 or abnormally dry to the highest of d4 or exceptional drought.

Looking at other indicators...the Palmer Index ending October 6...indicated severe drought conditions across southwestern climate division of West Virginia and southeast climate division of Ohio. Extreme drought conditions covers climate division 6 in SW Virginia and climate division 1 in eastern Kentucky.

The crop moisture index ending October 6th...indicated excessively dry conditions across southwestern climate division of West Virginia and climate division 1 in eastern Kentucky.

The extent of agricultural impacts have increased...the dry conditions are causing stress on area crops across the drought areas. Hay yields have been reduced across the region. Corn and soy bean

crops have been affected. Soils are dry. Water conservations measures are starting to appear in more communities. For example, the community of Oceana, along the Laurel Fork in Wyoming County, has a limited amount of water in reserve and has started water conservation. The town is looking at other options... including piping water in from other systems.

in Putnam County...the Hurricane reservoir remains very low. With many small streams dry...volunteer fire departments in Ritchie County...including Pennsboro...are hauling water for livestock... including horses.

Most area reservoir and major rivers levels were still running near or slightly below normal.



- WXJ84 —Charleston 162.400 MHz
- WXM74 —Sutton 162.450 MHz
- WXM70 —Garfield 162.500 MHz
- KZZ46 —Athens 162.425 MHz
- WXM71 —Beckley 162.550 MHz
- WXJ85 —Clarksburg 162.550 MHz
- KIH39 —Ashland 162.550 MHz
- WXM75 —Gilbert 162.475 MHz
- KXI74 —Monterville 162.525 MHz
- WNG734 —Marietta 162.400 MHz

National Weather Service

400 Parkway Road
Charleston, WV 25309

Editor: Dan Bartholf

Phone: 304-746-0180
Fax: 304-746-0193
Email:
daniel.bartholf@noaa.gov

▶ "Working Together
To Save Lives"



StormReady recognized counties in our area of coverage:

- Randolph County, WV
- Boyd County, KY
- Carter County, KY
- Jackson County, OH
- Lawrence County, KY

Recognition Pending: Harrison WV

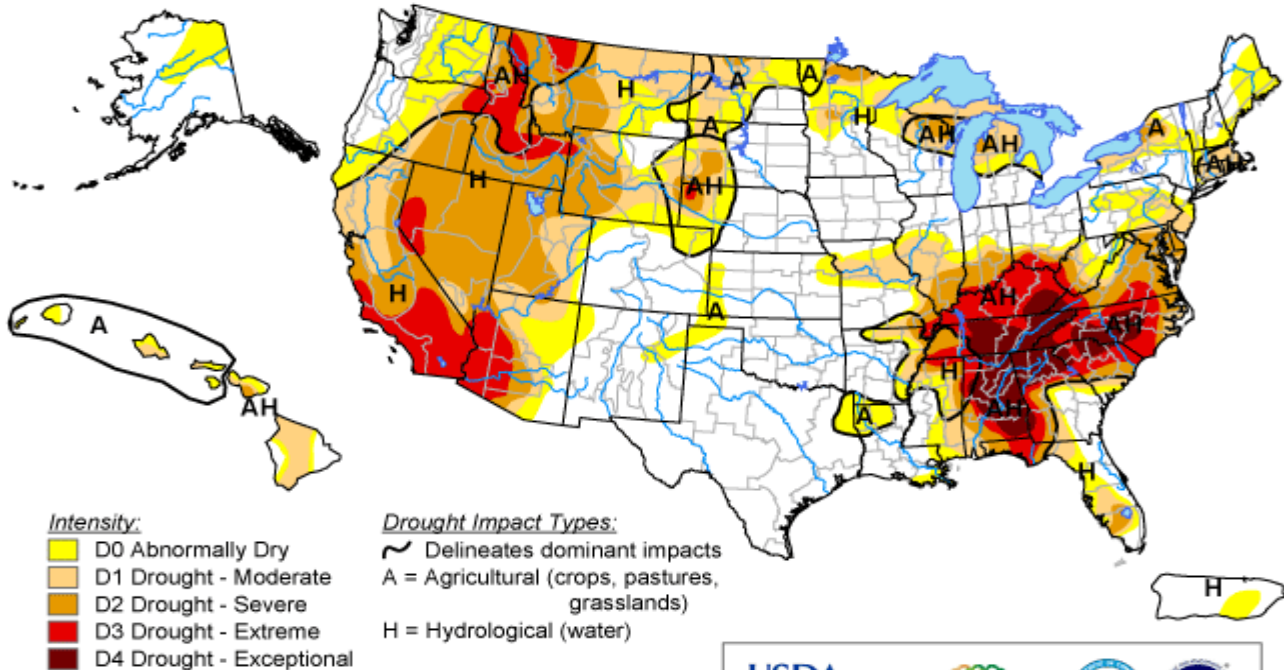
For further information on this program check the following website:
Weather.gov/stormready

Guidelines are available from this site. You can even apply on-line.

Contact Dan at the Charleston office for specific requirements of your state. Each state is slightly different in requirements and procedures.

U.S. Drought Monitor

October 9, 2007
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



Released Thursday, October 11, 2007

Author: Jay Lawrimore/Liz Love-Brotak, NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC