

# NWSChat

## A Valuable Situational Awareness and Coordination Tool for NOAA/NWS Partners



Kevin M. Smith  
Meteorologist  
National NWSChat Admin Team  
NOAA's National Weather Service  
United States



# What is NWSChat?

- A powerful situational awareness and coordination tool allowing instant messaging communication between NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) and our core domestic and international partners.
- By simply going to a website, you access a chat room where you can communicate with NOAA/NWS offices such as the Washington Volcanic Ash Advisory Center (VAAC), and monitor NOAA/NWS products such as Volcanic Ash Advisories (VAAs), in real time, all in one place!



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# What is NWSChat?

The screenshot displays the NWSChat Live web application interface. At the top, a map shows the United States with a red location marker. Below the map is a chat log with the following messages:

- (25 Nov 5:55 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for SANGAY
- (25 Nov 7:11 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for REVENTADOR
- (25 Nov 8:16 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for FUEGO
- (25 Nov 11:08 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for RUIZ
- (25 Nov 11:38 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for SANGAY
- (12:02 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for RUIZ
- (12:53 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for REVENTADOR
- (2:05 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for FUEGO
- (3:44 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for RUIZ
- (5:07 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for SANGAY
- (5:26 AM) aviation-eduardo.alomoto:** Buenos dias, ovm Guayaquil
- (6:22 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for REVENTADOR
- (6:26 AM) noaa-jane.zeng:** Buenos dias from Washington. Just updated Reventador.
- (6:32 AM) aviation-eduardo.alomoto:** OK THANKS
- (7:40 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for FUEGO
- (9:34 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for RUIZ
- (10:46 AM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for SANGAY
- (12:01 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for REVENTADOR
- (1:21 PM) nwsbot: Wash VAAC issues [Volcanic Ash Advisory \(VAA\)](#) for FUEGO

The interface also includes a 'Map Panel' at the top left, a 'Layers Control' panel on the right with options like 'Base Layer', 'ESRI Topo', 'Satellite', and 'PrecipRADAR', and a '4 people in room' list at the bottom right. A yellow bar at the bottom of the chat window contains a 'Send' button.



# NWSChat Brings You Virtually Into NOAA/NWS Operations!



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# Benefits

- **Communicate/Coordinate**  
Collaborate, Share, Ask Questions!
- **One-Stop Shop**  
Products and Discussion Together
- **Share Reports/Intelligence**  
During Hazardous Events
- **Coordinate Unified Messaging**  
To Protect Public and Commerce
- **Efficient**  
Reach Multiple Agencies/Countries
- **Non-Intrusive**  
Log In and Let it Run! Audible Alerts
- **Archived**  
Room Logs for After-Action Reviews
- **NO Requirements, Commitments, Extra Workload!**



# Benefits



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# Domestic Collaboration

# International Collaboration



# Example: Forecast Collaboration in NWSChat

(10 Dec 9:16 PM) usfs-ben.vandenbos: Thanks Dan. Any input on how the non-publicly available models are trending for Thursday/Friday system?

(10 Dec 9:25 PM) NWS Pocatello John H: Ben, neither Dan nor I have a good handle on the trends of the models right now--we're just beginning our set of swing shifts, so we don't have really good continuity. Dan is taking a quick look at some archive NBM data. Per the forecast--It looks like Thursday could bring possibly 12 to 18 inches to the higher elevations of the Sawtooth range.

(10 Dec 9:31 PM) NWS Pocatello Dan Valle: Ben, from what I can look back at, it looks like its been consistent for your area of concern. I'd say those western facing slopes are probably going to get a healthy amount of snow.

(10 Dec 9:50 PM) usfs-ben.vandenbos: Thanks guys, I appreciate it.

(10 Dec 9:51 PM) NWS Pocatello Dan Valle: sure thing

(10 Dec 10:08 PM) media-eric.brill: Hey Dan I appreciate the info with the watch! The conversation among you, John and Ben is also very helpful for myself as well!

(10 Dec 10:10 PM) NWS Pocatello John H: Glad we can help, Eric!



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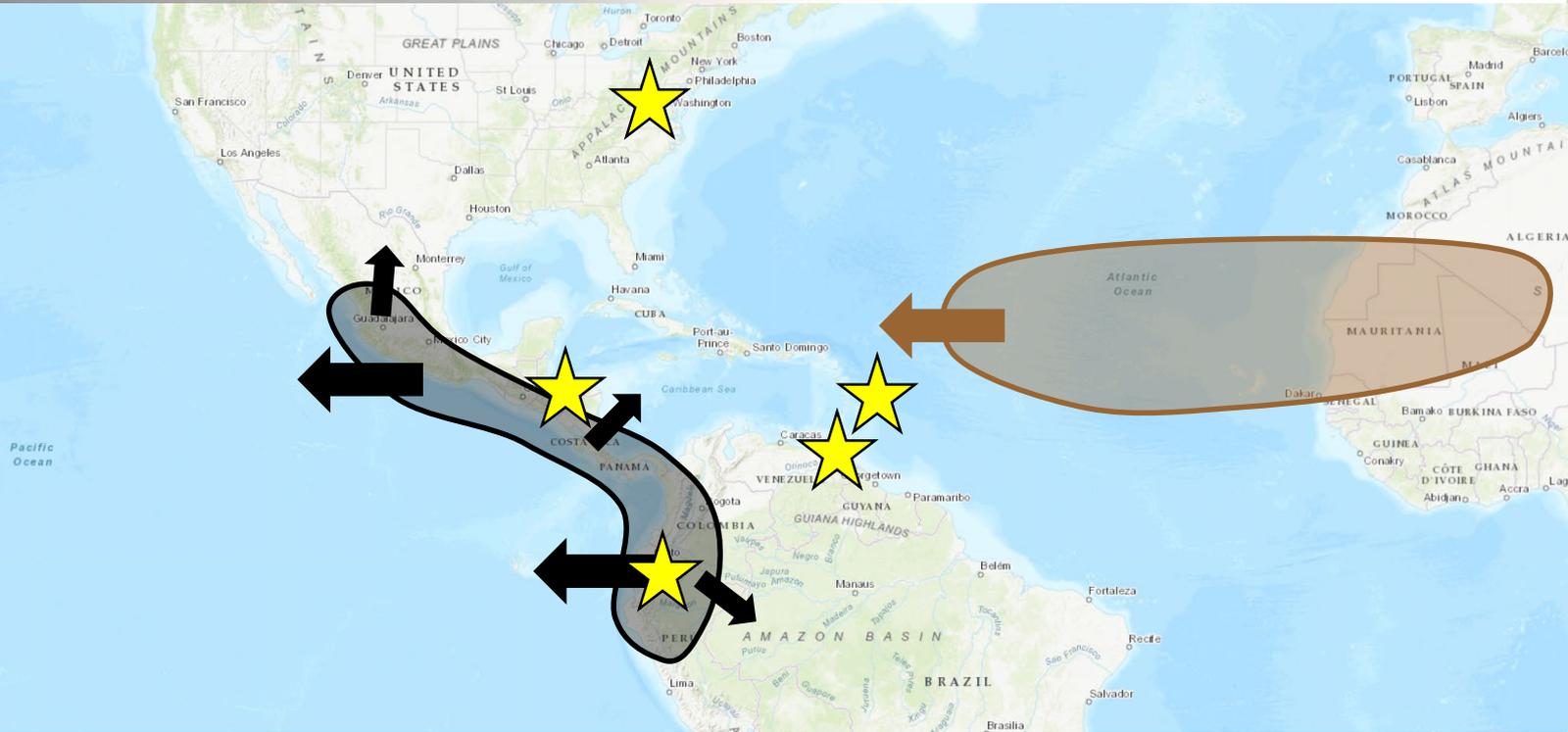
# Domestic Collaboration



# International Collaboration



# International Collaboration



Map by ESRI



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

**Step 1:** Submit request for NWSChat account at [nwschat.weather.gov/create.php](https://nwschat.weather.gov/create.php).

**Step 2:** Receive an NWSChat account approval email.

**Step 3:** Complete a brief, required training (training link in approval email).

**Step 4:** Bookmark NWSChat at [nwschat.weather.gov/live/](https://nwschat.weather.gov/live/) and log in!



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

**Step 1:** Submit request for NWSChat account at [nwschat.weather.gov/create.php](https://nwschat.weather.gov/create.php).

## 1. Agree to Terms

I have read and agree to the [terms of use](#)

Read the NWSChat Terms of Use, and then check the box.

## 2. Requested NWSChat Username (must be lowercase!)

This is your username which you will use to log into the chat server. This username is much like an email address, so the same formatting rules apply (no spaces, no apostrophes, no special characters, etc.)

**Option 1:** Fill out this form to generate my NWSChat username. Note: First and Last name must be your actual name. Generic or group accounts are not allowed.

Select "International Meteorological Service" from the drop-down menu, and enter your name. Group accounts are not permitted!

Prefix / Affiliation:

- International Meteorological Service
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Environment Canada
- Federal Aviation Administration
- FEMA
- Fire
- Fire Weather GACC
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Ham Radio
- International Meteorological Service
- Japan Meteorological Agency
- Law Enforcement / Dispatch
- Marine Vessel and Port Piloting and Navigation
- Media
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Guard
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

First Name:

Middle Initial (optional):

Last Name:

If you do not apply, or you are unsure as to which prefix/affiliation to choose, please explicitly state your NWSChat Username preference.

The ONLY thing we can't edit in the NWSChat system is your username. So select the correct Prefix / Affiliation and spell your name correctly!



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

## 3. Common Name on Account

This is the name that your account will appear to others as in their Buddy List. You should enter something descriptive of you and your organization. (Nothing greater than 36 characters)

- Include your call letters, if you are media (Ex: kxyz-chief.meteorologist or KPXTV-Jane.Doe)
- Include your geography, if you are an ema (Ex: fulton-ga-ema-lastname)
- Include your agency and office, if you are government (Ex: faa-memphis-lastname)
- If fire or law/dispatch, include your jurisdiction and at least your last name
- If amateur radio, include your callsign (Ex: ARES-Smith-County-WD0TWU-Johnson)

## 4. Contact Email Address

Your current work email address is required for account validation, resetting your password, and so we can contact you with NWSChat password expiration reminders and notices. This should be your official/work email address. Your email address will not be shared with anyone outside of NWSChat local and national administrators.

### Common Name Format:

*(all lowercase)*

mwo-location-last name

facility-location-last name

### Examples:

mwo-guayaquil-sanchez

cenaprd-mexico-city-sanchez

Enter your work email address.



**IMPORTANT:** Enter your WORK email address, NOT a personal email address, if at all possible! We use this as a additional means of employment verification.



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

## 5. Your Phone Number

This is the phone at which you can be reached for further information, if needed (work phone number is preferred). Your phone number will not be shared with anyone outside of this project!

Enter your phone number.

## 6. Your Affiliation

This is the company, agency, office, etc... with which you work.

- If you are media, enter your call sign (Ex: KXYZ)
- If you are emergency management, enter that you are an EM (Ex: EMA)
- If you are government, enter your agency/office (Ex: FAA-Memphis)
- If you are local government (law, dispatch, fire, etc.), include your associated government agency, county, etc. affiliation
- If you are amateur radio, include your associated government agency, county, etc. affiliation

Enter the name of your agency/organization.

Example:  
Barbados Meteorological Services

## 7. Password for your new Account

Enter Password:

Verify Password:

### NWSChat Password Requirements:

Items listed below are either **Completed** or **Unsatisfied**

1. Entered passwords must match.
2. Password length must be at least 12 characters.
3. Passwords must contain at least 6 unique characters.
4. Passwords must contain at least one lowercase, one uppercase, and one special character or digit.

Follow the listed requirements to create a password.



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

## 8. Select one PRIMARY office/center to approve your account request

In order to gain access to NWSChat, your account request must be approved by a National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office or Center. Select the office you plan to communicate with based upon your location and role from the list below. Once approved, you will be able to chat with other offices/centers as needed. If you don't have one specific office/center (such as for a national news media or government partner account requests), select the "National (NONE)" option to have your account request sent to the NWSChat Manager.

### NWS Offices & Centers

The screenshot shows a form with several tabs: National, Aviation, NCEP, Regional Support, River Forecast Center, and Weather Forecast Office. Below these tabs is a section for 'Fire GACCs'. Underneath, there is a radio button selection for 'National (NONE)'. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Create Account' and 'Reset'. Red boxes highlight the 'National' tab, the 'National (NONE)' radio button, and the 'Create Account' button. A red arrow points from the 'National (NONE)' radio button to the 'Create Account' button.

Select the “National” tab, and then “National (NONE)”.

Click “Create Account”.



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# How to Request an NWSChat Account

**Step 2:** Receive an NWSChat account approval email. Watch your Spam folder too!

**Step 3:** Complete a brief, required training (training link in approval email).

Home > Mandatory Training

NWSChat Mandatory Training Next

### NWSChat Mandatory Training

#### 1. Overview

This document provides essential information on the use of NWSChat and serves as the required initial training for NWSChat account holders. You must read each section and click on the "Finish Training and Agree to Terms of Use" in order to satisfy the training requirements.

All NWS and Non-NWS NWSChat participants will be required to review this on-line training material and agree to Terms of Use at the completion of this training in order to obtain/initialize an account. All NWS NWSChat participants will also be required to take this training on an annual basis for continued access and use of the system.

Next  
2. Account Setup

Home > Mandatory Training

NWSChat Mandatory Training Next

#### 2. NWSChat Account Setup

Access to the NWSChat system requires a valid account on the server. All users will have individual accounts. A valid account will consist of the users' affiliation and full name (e.g. tws-joe.forecaster@nwschat.weather.gov, em-pjtn.doe@nwschat.weather.gov, media-wendy.dav@nwschat.weather.gov, or ham-pjtn.doe@nwschat.weather.gov). Although users must have an individual account using their name, NWSChat allows users the ability to operate under a handle while using the system. Other chatroom users only see the handle name, but the actual user named account is used for access and that information is maintained in internal (non-public) logs. This ensures individual accountability by the system while providing a level of anonymity, if the user chooses.

**\*Note:** The displaying of a personal name while using NWSChat is entirely at the discretion of the individual and their organization. NWS employees cannot be mandated to use their names as any part of an account handle.

As an individual participant you are responsible for any activity that occurs under your account or user name. You are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any and all passwords used for access to NWSChat. Your password is for your use only and that you may not give your password to any other person or cause the password to be distributed to other persons. NWS policy requires passwords to be 12 characters long with a validity of 180 days. If the password is not changed by the end of the 180 day period, the system will lock you out. Reminder notices will be sent in advance to notify you of the end of the 180 day period.

Prev Next  
1. Overview 3. Use

Home > Mandatory Training

NWSChat Mandatory Training Next

#### 3. NWSChat Use

NWSChat will include a wide variety of types of information. Some of this information will include contents of official NWS products available through other NWS systems and thus available to the public.

However, other NWSChat content may include preliminary data which has not been screened by NWS for accuracy or applicability, highly technical discussions, some of them speculative, regarding atmospheric or other environmental conditions; and other types of information not intended for a general audience.

NWSChat participants are expected to avoid release of information to a broader audience that might be misinterpreted or cause confusion.

NWSChat is an enhancement to communications between the NWS and its partners, and is not intended to replace official NWS products or official means of communications.

NWS Field Office Use. At no time will NWSChat interfere with the NWS warning and forecast decision making and dissemination process. NWSChat is an enhanced service tool, as such, it may be temporarily suspended at the discretion of the office management or the Senior Forecaster without prior notice. This would most likely occur due to workload constraints.

NWSChat Content and Etiquette. NWSChat is meant to enhance communications between the NWS and its core partners. NWSChat will not replace official NWS products. All exchanges should remain concise, professional and germane to the given hydrometeorological or hazardous event.

**NWS personnel may provide understanding of current and expected meteorological conditions that could affect a decision on issuing or cancelling an NWS product. NWS personnel may never provide advance notice that an NWS office (field office or national center) intends to issue/extend/cancel a watch/warning/advisory before the product is issued since such knowledge may have commercial value. Statements pertaining to watches/warnings/advisories such as "we will be issuing later this period" or "they soon will be issuing" via NWSChat, or other areas where the audience is limited, are considered pre-release of information. Such statements are prohibited, subject to the following exceptions: NWS personnel may use chat to state that the process for issuing a warning, watch, or advisory product is underway, provided that this information: a) has previously been disseminated via the Area Forecast Discussion (AFD) or comparable NWS text product, or b) is issued 5 minutes or less subsequent to the chat notification.**

References to topics, individuals, offices or groups that are extraneous to a hydrometeorological or other hazardous event discussion should be avoided. Include personal comments, particularly those regarding other individuals or situations apart from the topic of collaboration, are to be avoided.

All participants should be aware that NWSChat sessions are recorded, archived, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and may be used at a later time in reviewing particular events or incidents.

All information, text, data files, images, messages, links, or other materials (referred to as "Content") which you may have access to or is transmitted by the NWSChat is the sole responsibility of the person from whom the Content originated. You are therefore responsible for the Content you post, upload, or in any way make available via NWSChat.

Prev Next  
2. Account Setup 4. Prohibited Activities

Home > Mandatory Training

NWSChat Mandatory Training Next

#### 4. Prohibited Activities

1. Post, transmit, upload or otherwise make available any Content that is unlawful, threatening, abusive, obscene, harmful, defamatory, invasive of other's privacy, or racially, ethnically or otherwise objectionable.
2. Use the Service for personal gain.
3. Disrupt or engage in any activity which interrupts the Service.
4. Release Content to a broader audience that might be misinterpreted or cause confusion. This includes streaming of chats via the web or web-like services.
5. Any violation of the Terms of Use.

**\*Note: Use or disclosure of the information contained in NWSChat for the purpose of personal gain is forbidden and may result in criminal or civil penalties in addition to termination of privileges as an NWSChat participant.**

IT Security. The chat client software installed on NWS office computer systems is bound by all applicable DOC/NOAA/NWS rules and regulations governing appropriate and approved use of federal government IT equipment. All NWS personnel are annually certified in NOAA IT Security, and will be held accountable for any violations as stated by policy.

Prev Next  
3. Use 5. Documentation and Troubleshooting

Home > Mandatory Training

NWSChat Mandatory Training Next

#### 5. Documentation and Troubleshooting

Read the "Terms of Use" to complete the training.

Extensive documentation on account request procedures, chat client software configuration, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) can be found in the [Documentation](#) section of the NWSChat website.

If you have a question that remains unanswered after viewing the documentation and FAQ page on the website, please visit the [Contact Us](#) page where you can email your local NWS Office NWSChat focal point. That person should be able to assist you.

Thanks for completing the training and welcome to NWSChat.

[Finish Training and Agree to Terms of Use](#)

Prev Next  
4. Prohibited Activities



# How to Request an NWSChat Account

Home > Mandatory Training

**NWSChat Mandatory Training**

[Prev](#)

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[Prev](#)

4. Prohibited Activities

If you cannot access the chatroom you need, please reach out to our team at [nwschatadmin@noaa.gov](mailto:nwschatadmin@noaa.gov) for assistance!

**Step 4:** Bookmark NWSChat at [nwschat.weather.gov/live/](https://nwschat.weather.gov/live/) and log in!

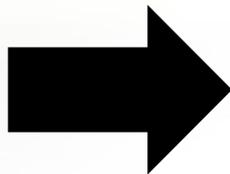


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# Why Are We Doing This?

Weather doesn't obey borders!

The more we communicate,  
the more we collaborate,  
the more information we share...



The better our forecasts will be,  
and the better we can all serve  
our partners and the public!



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# Questions?

**NWSChat Admin Team**

**[nwschatadmin@noaa.gov](mailto:nwschatadmin@noaa.gov)**



**Request an NWSChat Account**  
**[nwschat.weather.gov/create.php](https://nwschat.weather.gov/create.php)**



**Log In to NWSChat**

**[nwschat.weather.gov/live/](https://nwschat.weather.gov/live/)**

**Thank You!**