

# Central Illinois Lincoln Logs

Volume 7, Issue 4

Winter 2004

## Winter Weather Preparedness Week

November 14<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004

By Melissa Byrd  
Forecaster

This is the time to make those final preparations for the inevitable winter season. Winter Weather Preparedness week is November 14<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>, so it is time to review some important items:

- \* Know the difference between a Watch, Warning and Advisory
- \* Have a family protection plan in case you lose power or heat
- \* Keep in mind the dangers of snow shoveling- especially senior citizens
- \* Give your vehicle a check-up for winter weather temperatures and conditions
- \* When traveling, tell a friend or family member your route, and be cautious near snowplows

Many types of winter information can be found on our

*continued on page 2*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Winter Weather Preparedness Week
- 1 Cooperative Observer Awards
- 3 How are Cooperative Observer Reports Used?
- 4 NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) Corner

## Cooperative Observer Awards

By Chris Geelhart  
HMT



**Betty English of Marietta was presented with a 20 year Length of Service Award on March 30, 2004. Betty took over the observing responsibilities on December 1, 1983, from her daughter Trudy, who began observing at the site in 1972 at the age of 12.**



**Doug Nuttall (left) of Lawrenceville was presented with a 25 year Length of Service Award by Chris Miller, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Lincoln NWS, on March 17, 2004. Doug began taking weather observations for the NWS in September 1979; his teenage sister Julie took the observations while Doug lived out of state from 1985 to 1990.**

homepage at: [www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx)

Additional safety information can also be obtained from:

IEMA <http://www.state.il.us/iema/>

Red Cross <http://www.redcross.org>

National Weather Service  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/index.shtml>

Operation Ice Pack <http://www.icepack.org/>

Latest Winter Watches and Warnings  
<http://iwin.nws.noaa.gov/iwin/il/winterstorm.html>

IDOT Road Conditions Website  
[http://dot.state.il.us/operations/mo\\_state.html](http://dot.state.il.us/operations/mo_state.html)

or you can call 1-800-452-4368 for road conditions.

## Winter Weather Definitions

### Warnings:

**Blizzard** - The following conditions are expected to prevail for a period of 3 hours or longer: sustained wind or frequent gusts to 35 mph and considerable falling and/or blowing snow reducing visibilities to less than a 1/4 mile.

**Winter Storm** - More than one of the following hazardous winter weather conditions is occurring, imminent, or highly likely.

**Heavy Snow** - Snowfall accumulating to 6 inches in 12 hours or 8 inches in 24 hours.

**Ice Storm** - Ice accumulations of 1/4 or more during a freezing rain event.

**Sleet** - Accumulation of 1/2 inch or more of sleet.

### Advisories:

**Winter Weather** - More than one of the following winter weather situations is occurring, expected, or highly probable causing significant inconveniences but do not meet warning criteria.

**Snow** - Issued for 3 to 5 inches of snow or an early season snow of 2 inches.

**Blowing Snow** - Visibility is intermittently 1/4 mile or less with sustained winds of 25 to 30 mph.

**Snow and Blowing Snow** - A combination of the 2 above.

**Freezing Drizzle/Rain** - Ice accumulations cause driving or walking problems but no damage to trees or power lines (less than 1/4 inch accumulation).

**Sleet** - Less than 1/2 inch accumulation of sleet.

**Wind Chill** - Based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by combined effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at a faster rate, driving down the body temperature.

**Wind Chill Warning** - Wind chill values drop to -25 degrees or below.

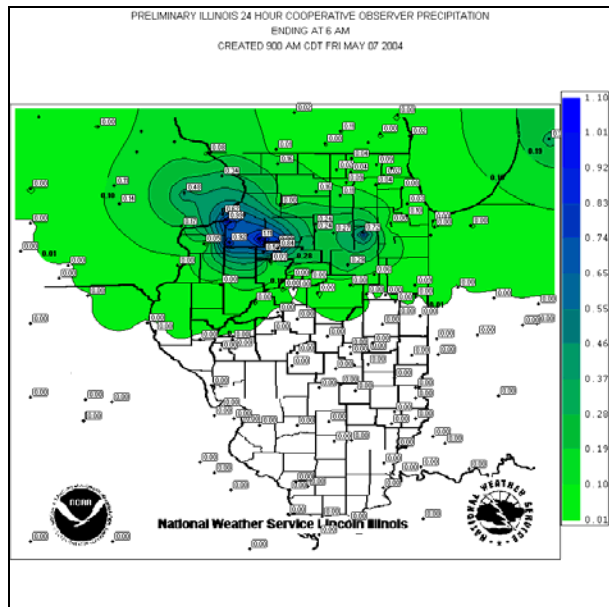
**Wind Chill Advisory** - Wind chill values drop to between -15 and -24 degrees.



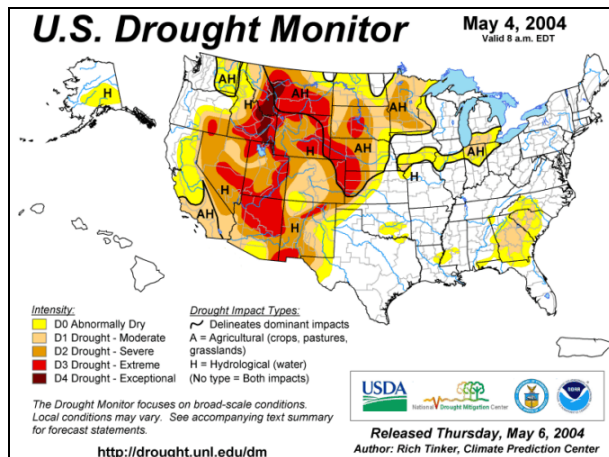
# How are Cooperative Observer Reports Used?

By Chris Geelhart  
HMT

Cooperative (COOP) observers send in observation forms each month, which are archived by the National Climatic Data Center. These observed data are useful for long-term climate monitoring of an area. However, real-time (daily) reporting of COOP observations is also very useful. Here are a few examples:

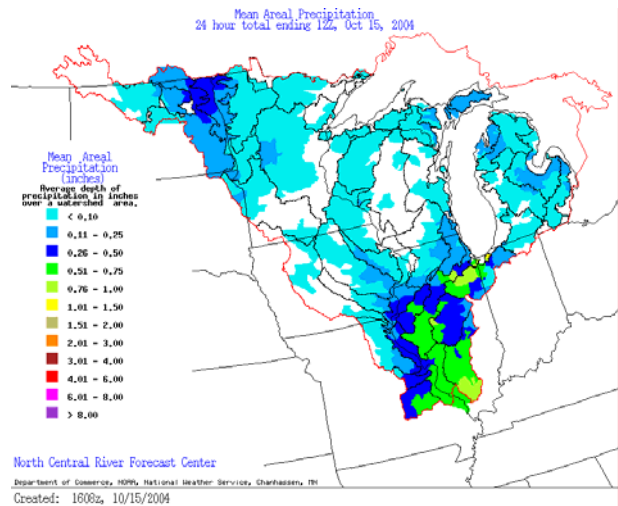


Each day, the Lincoln NWS generates maps of observed temperatures and precipitation, for use on our homepage ([http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx/illinois\\_daily.php](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx/illinois_daily.php)). The analysis is improved when there are more observation points to use.



Observations relayed daily are also an important part of the

U.S. Drought Monitor, which is updated each week. In the image above, part of central Illinois is considered "abnormally dry" (indicated in yellow). Without real-time COOP data, only the coarser airport station network (e.g. Peoria, Springfield, Decatur) would be available in time for this drought report.



River Forecast Centers (RFC) use COOP data to help forecast river levels. While the NWS Doppler radars estimate precipitation values, the estimates are not always accurate. COOP obs help the RFC verify the accuracy of radar estimates, and are used to help determine water runoff which can lead to river flooding.

CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION TABLE  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LINCOLN IL  
936 AM CDT WED MAY 12 2004

COOPERATIVE OBSERVER REPORTS  
DATA IS FOR THE 24-HOUR PERIOD ENDING AT 7 AM

```
.BR ILX 0512 C DH07/TX/TN/PP
:
: ID LOCATION HIGH LOW PCPN
:
: CENTRAL ILLINOIS...
AHN12: ATHENS 2SW : 83/ 64/ 0.21
ATN12: ATHENS 2N : / / 0.33
BUF12: BUFFALO : / / 0.03
CHP12: CHAPIN 4E : / / T
CLT12: CLINTON : / / 0.12
EUR12: EUREKA : / / 0.19
FIN12: FINDLAY : / / 0.00
GRO12: GROVELAND : / / 0.00
HVA12: HAVANA 4NNE : 85/ 59/ 0.00
```

Daily observations are also transmitted to the media as Temperature and Precipitation Tables. They are also viewable from our homepage; go to <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx> and click on the "Temp/Precip Table" link about halfway down the left side of the page.

The NWS appreciates the efforts of the COOP observers who phone in or relay reports daily. On a quiet day, there are about 25-30 observers who relay their reports daily. However, we would encourage our other observers to report daily, or at least when precipitation occurs. These can be phoned in, or entered on the Internet. For more information, contact Billy Ousley at [billy.ousley@noaa.gov](mailto:billy.ousley@noaa.gov).

# NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) Corner

By Patrick Bak  
Lead Forecaster

## **A “smoke detector” for severe weather and other hazards!**

Most homes have a smoke detector installed and the National Weather Service would like to see NWR receivers become just as numerous. One of the most important features to look for in a NWR receiver is an alarm. If a radio equipped with an alarm is left in standby mode, the alarm will sound when our office issues a Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning, a Tornado Watch or Warning, a Flash Flood Watch or Warning, or a Blizzard Warning. Just like your smoke detector alerts you to take action during a fire, a NWR receiver with an alarm alerts you to take action during severe weather. Upon hearing the alarm, you can listen to the broadcast to see if your immediate area is threatened by severe weather. A recent addition to NWR broadcasts are alerts on an as needed basis for Civil Emergency and Amber Alert messages. These messages will contain information on chemical releases, oil spills, child abductions, or other local emergency concerns.

Some people tend to leave their NWR receivers turned off because they are afraid the alarm will go off too often or for a county they are not interested in. If this concerns you, be sure to purchase a NWR receiver with the Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) feature. SAME equipped radios can be programmed to be county specific. Once you program your county's code into the radio, the alarm will only sound for alerts issued for your county.

## **NWR - Your weather information source!**

For those of you in range of a NWR transmitter, this is your best and quickest way to receive weather forecasts and warnings direct from the National Weather Service in Lincoln. Our office provides programming to nine transmitters. They are located in Springfield, Peoria, Champaign, Jacksonville, Newton, Shelbyville, Bloomington, Galesburg, and

Paris. These transmitters provide effective radio coverage to the majority of central and southeast Illinois. Check out this web site <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx/nwr/ilxnwr.php> for more information on NWR and our coverage area. ❖

The Central Illinois Lincoln Logs is a quarterly review of NWS activities in Central Illinois and is available on our internet page at <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ilx>

Your comments are welcomed and can be addressed to either editor at our office.

### **Co-editors.....**

Chris Miller, Warning Coordination  
Meteorologist [Chris.Miller@noaa.gov](mailto:Chris.Miller@noaa.gov)

Billy Ousley, Data Acquisition Program  
Manager [Billy.Ousley@noaa.gov](mailto:Billy.Ousley@noaa.gov)

### **Newsletter designer/editor....**

Melissa Byrd, Forecaster  
[Melissa.Byrd@noaa.gov](mailto:Melissa.Byrd@noaa.gov)

### **Meteorologist-In-Charge.....**

Ernie Goetsch  
[Ernest.Goetsch@noaa.gov](mailto:Ernest.Goetsch@noaa.gov)