



# Central Illinois Lincoln Logs



Volume 5 Issue 1

Spring 2002

## Severe Weather Preparedness Week

March 3<sup>rd</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002

### Words of Wisdom From the WCM

by Rod Palmer, WCM

**G**et Ready! Here it comes! Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Illinois will be March 3<sup>rd</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> this year. The statewide testing of tornado sirens will be on Tuesday, March 5, at 10:00 AM. NOAA Weather Radios (NWR) will also be

tested at the same time with a practice tornado warning.

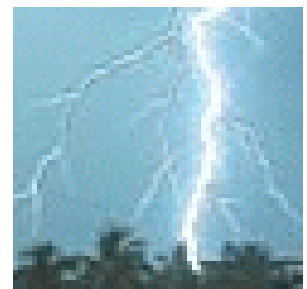


This is also a time for individuals, families, institutions, offices, factories, hospitals, nursing homes, and day care centers to test their emergency weather

plans. This will help to identify any shortcomings in your “take shelter” plans. The many forms of severe weather that strike the state of Illinois every year can be considered a type of “terrorist attack.” Our severe weather events can be as life-threatening to residents or a community as a bombing attack from enemy aircraft. Ask the residents of Monticello! It is imperative that we have a plan to take safe shelter during these attacks and exercise those plans so that they really work when they are most needed. We don’t know what the 2002 severe weather season holds for us. Last year was a relatively quiet season with only 21 tornadoes in Illinois. We normally have 30 per year. There are indications that El Nino is starting to develop but it isn’t expected to have much affect on our weather until late summer or fall. We are basically in a neutral period between El Nino and La Nina, so we really don’t how intense and frequent our severe weather events will be. One thing we can be sure of, there will be severe weather this spring and summer.

### Lightning Awareness Safety Week

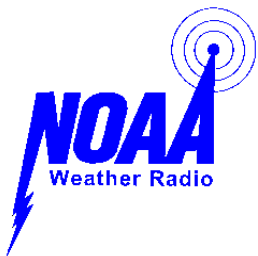
Every thunderstorm that moves across central Illinois produces



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lightning. Very few produce large hail and damaging straight line winds. Even fewer produce tornadoes. But every single one produces lightning. All lightning is potentially deadly! More people are killed in the United States by lightning than tornadoes and hurricanes combined. Lightning is to be respected. In conjunction with the threat of lightning, the National Weather Service has proclaimed April 28 - May 4 as "Lightning Awareness Safety Week" across the nation. Last year it was held in June, but in order to reach our children with this important message, it was moved up to catch them while they're still in school. This also has a better chance of reaching athletic coaches and physical education teachers who have charge of children on playfields and swimming pools. We hope to carry this over into the summer when children are involved in athletic teams, camping, boating and hiking. For information on safety rules and characteristics of lightning, go to the website [www.lightningsafety.noaa.com](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.com).



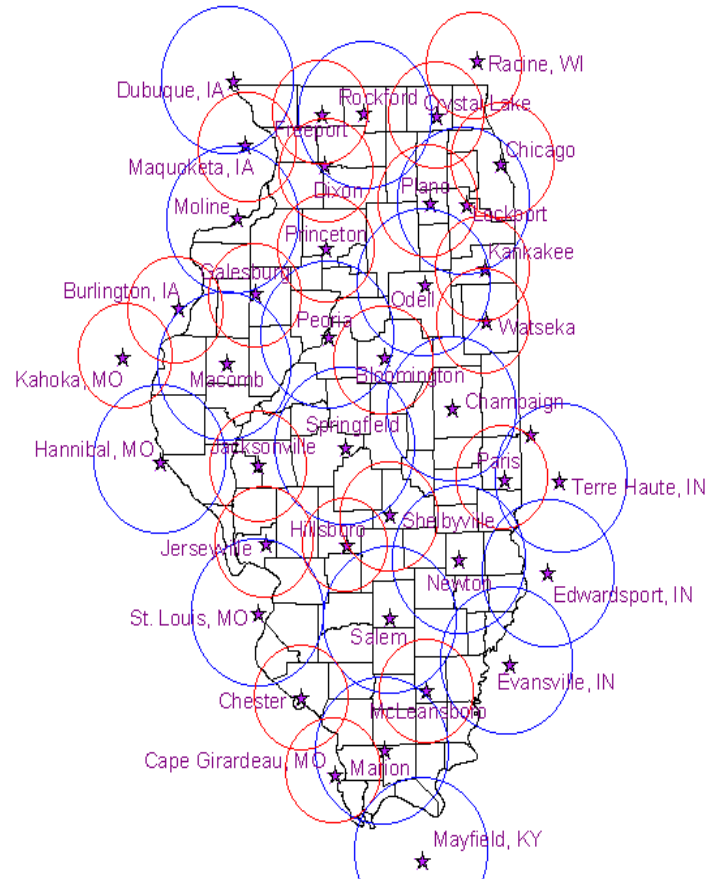
### NOAA Weather Radio (NWR)

The NWR initiative for Illinois is now complete.

Two years ago there were seven NWR transmitters in Illinois. Today there are 27! Thanks to an initiative that included the work and influence of local Emergency Managers, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, members of the state legislature, the Governor's office, members of the Illinois Congressional delegation, and the National Weather Service. Thanks to the efforts of all of these groups, we now have NWR coverage for about 95% plus of our citizens of Illinois.

**The "New Voice" of NWR** should be available across Illinois around **April 1, 2002**. The "New Voice" will be easier for listeners to understand, especially for warnings and forecasts.

## 2002 NOAA WEATHER RADIO NETWORK



Map provided by Chris Geelhart, NWS Lincoln

## "Normal" Weather Has Changed

by Chris Geelhart, HMT

Every 10 years, climate station normals are updated by the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), using a new 30 year period. A new set of normals, using data from 1971 through 2000, began use on January 1st.

All elements, except for heating degree days and snowfall, are now using the new set of normals. Because heating degree days and snowfall are calculated using a "season" of July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>, these elements will begin using the

new normals on July 1<sup>st</sup>, at the start of the new season.

### **Methodology**

Daily normals are not computed by simply averaging the 30 years' worth of data each day. Rather, they are interpolated from the monthly normals (which are less variable), using a natural spline function. This results in smooth changes in normals from day to day. Also, this results in the average of the daily normal temperatures and precipitation equaling the original monthly normals.

There are several reasons this method is used:

- A simple average of the 30 years' worth of data would give considerable variability from day to day, and may result in unexpected trends (for example, normal temperatures increasing as autumn progresses, instead of decreasing).
- Few stations remain in the exact location, using the same instruments, for the entire period. Station relocations and changes in instrumentation can cause non-homogeneous changes.
- Periods of missing data cause direct calculation of the daily normals difficult, and are better handled by using the monthly normals and estimation methods instead of the individual averages.

In calculation of the monthly normals, changes in station location and instruments, observation time, and gaps in observed data, are factored into the equation. Up to 20 nearby stations are used in comparisons, when attempting to estimate missing data.

For monthly temperature and precipitation normal, the 30 years' worth of data are averaged for each month, and corrected for the previously-mentioned factors. Degree days for most

locations were also calculated using this method. However, for many NWS stations, degree day normals were calculated directly from the daily values. This may result in the sum of the normal daily values not adding up to the normal monthly value. NCDC is looking into this issue, and plans to minimize this quirk when the new heating degree day normals are implemented this summer.

For more details on how "normals" are calculated, visit NCDC's homepage at <http://1wf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/normals/usnormals.html>.

The climate section of the NWS Lincoln homepage contains the new 1971-2000 normals for Peoria and Springfield.

## **Co-op Awards**

By Chris Geelhart, HMT

**R**on Pollock (center) accepts a 25 Year Institutional Length of Service Award in September, on behalf of the Clinton Sanitary District. Pictured with Ron are ILX DAPM Billy Ousley and meteorologist Kirk Huettl.





Orris and Lois Seng of Windsor were presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award in December.



Hoopston observer Audrey Mushrush was presented with the Edward H. Stoll 50 Year Length of Service Award in January. Pictured with Audrey are ILX DAPM Billy Ousley and MIC Ernie Goetsch.



Dalias and Lillian Price of Charleston were presented with a 40 Year Length of Service Award in December.

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. Summer Central Illinois Lincoln Logs Issue to be issued by the end of May 2002.

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