

Safety & Environmental Newsletter

March 2014 Issue



When it comes to tornadoes, there's no such thing as a "tornado season." Tornadoes can strike anywhere, anytime, and you need to know the drill. Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. They can appear suddenly without warning and can be invisible until dust and debris are picked up or a funnel cloud appears. Be prepared to act quickly.

Know the Signs

- Strong, persistent rotation in the base of a cloud
- Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base – tornadoes sometimes have no visible funnel
- Hail or heavy rain followed by dead calm or a fast, intense wind shift. Many tornadoes, especially in Virginia, are wrapped in heavy precipitation and can't be seen.
- Loud, continuous roar or rumble which doesn't fade in a few seconds like thunder does
- If it's night, look for small, bright, blue-green to white flashes at ground level (as opposed to silvery lightning up in the clouds). These lights are power lines being snapped by very strong wind, perhaps a tornado.
- Persistent lowering of the cloud base



August 2012 – Waterspout off of Saxis, VA. Waterspouts are tornadoes that are over the water.

Watches and Warnings - Learn the terms that are used to identify a tornado.

Tornado Watch: a tornado is possible in your area. You should monitor weather-alert radios and local radio and TV stations for information.

Tornado Warning: a tornado has been sighted in the area or has been indicated by National Weather Service Doppler radar. When a warning is issued, take cover immediately.



Deltaville, VA – April, 2011

Tornado Safety Rules for Wallops Flight Facility

- The safest place to be while at Wallops is a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of the building you are in when the warning sounds.
- No mobile work trailers are safe during tornadoes. Abandon these trailers and go to the nearest permanent, sturdy building immediately.
- If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in the nearest permanent, sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a building:
 1. Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt, and try to drive to the closest permanent, sturdy building
 2. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have the following options as a last resort:
 - Stay in your vehicle with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands along with a blanket or coat if possible.
 - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.
- Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances



**BEFORE DISASTER STRIKES, HAVE A PLAN—
KNOW THE SAFE AREAS OF YOUR WORK SPACE!**



Nassawadox 2010 - The only thing saving the man in the trailer pictured above was the Dell lap-

top he put over his head as he sat in his recliner. His laptop was destroyed along with the rest of his home. Dell replaced his laptop after the local news reported his story. If you look closely at the picture, you will notice his recliner is fine and also the decoys on the wall were untouched.

SAFETY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Course	Date	Building and Room Number
NFPA 101 Life Safety Code	June 16-18	Building E-104 Room 116
Cryogenic Safety	July 22-23	Building E-104 Room 214
Cryogenic Safety	September 23-24	Building E-104 Room 214



Red Knot



Red Knot's Breeding Plumage

In October 2013, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that it was considering listing the Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The reduction in food available to the Red Knots because of the

heavy harvesting of horseshoe crabs may be responsible for a decline in Red Knot populations.

Red Knots can be found on Wallops Beach during the month of May, primarily in mid May. They stop here to feed in the intertidal zone during their long journey.

The Red Knot is a large sandpiper, measuring 10 inches long, with a 22 inch wingspan. Both males and females look similar. The Red Knot's legs are short and thick, and its bill is short and straight. The head and breast, while gray most of the year, are reddish in breeding plumage. The Red Knot makes one of the longest yearly migrations of any bird, traveling 9,300 miles from its Arctic breeding grounds to Tierra del Fuego in southern South America.



Red Knot

Red Knots concentrate in huge numbers at traditional staging grounds during migration. The Delaware Bay is an important staging area during spring migration, where Red Knots feed on the eggs of spawning

horseshoe crabs. According to the Cornell Lab on Ornithology, it is estimated that nearly 90 percent of the entire population of the Red Knot subspecies *C. c. rufa* can be present on the bay in a single day.

Source: http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/red_knot/lifehistory

Wallops Recreational Beach Use Notice Released

On March 20, 2014, the Recreational Use of Wallops Island (WI) Special Announcement was released. This Special Announcement describes the times and areas of WI which may be used for recreational purposes. In addition, it lists areas which are off-limits. As in previous years, the north end of WI is closed to pedestrian and vehicular use effective March 15, 2014. This marked area is closed to protect the piping plover during nesting season. As a reminder, recreational ATVs are not permitted on Wallops Beach.

For additional information, please contact Lauren Chance at extension 1179.

Ask the Inspector



Dear Sherlock,
I just changed the battery in my calculator. It was a rechargeable battery but it just won't hold a charge any more. Can I just throw it in the trash?
Signed,
Uncharged

Dear Uncharged,
Wallops recycles all batteries. No batteries should be placed in the trash. In fact the Environmental Protection Agency requires the recycling of rechargeable batteries. These batteries are called Universal Waste and when collected in a box or other container, must be labeled "UNIVERSAL WASTE BATTERIES" and dated on the date the first battery is placed inside. Batteries, including 9 Volt alkaline batteries, should be taped to prevent accidental discharge before batteries are placed in a container.

Sound confusing?
For more help or pick-up of batteries, call the Hazardous Waste Hotline at extension 1718.