

For All Skywarn Participants

Free WXSpots Log Software

WXSpots Log is a free computer program with which individual severe weather observers from our community and all over the United States can post and share local weather conditions via the Internet, especially during severe weather. The program does not replace existing methods of communicating ground truth reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service, such as the telephone and Amateur Radio Skywarn nets. Instead, it offers an additional way to report observations. All severe weather spotters, both Amateur Radio operators and non-Amateurs, can use WXSpots Log if they have access to the Internet.

In addition to allowing observers to post current severe weather observations, the program also allows quick chats (similar to Instant Messaging) between individual observers, making for excellent ground reports of weather conditions.

This program can be downloaded from <http://www.wxspots.com/>. We hope that you will install this FREE program on your computer as soon as possible so that you can become familiar with its functions before the next severe weather occurs. You will find the program easy and intuitive to use. Observers using the program are asked to add BLACKSBURG NWS to their list of Group Names and to post their observations to that group.

When there is a severe weather event, the posted information is monitored on-line by the operator at the Amateur Radio Skywarn station at the National Weather Service office in Blacksburg. During the snow and ice storm of January 17, 2008, this program showed that it may become a very effective tool in gathering concise and timely weather observations.

As you are aware, the National Weather Service office in Blacksburg forecast area includes forty counties in West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina. Amateur Radio operators and everyone interested in how Amateur Radio contributes to severe weather preparedness in the Blacksburg NWS forecast area are encouraged to visit the Blacksburg NWS Skywarn web site at <http://www.wx4rnk.org/>.

National Weather Service personnel in Blacksburg are interested in the effective use of this program by severe weather spotters because it adds another way for the NWS to receive real-time, concise reports of ground observations from trained observers.

Questions about using the WXSpots Log software? If your question is not answered on the WXSpots Log web site, the contact person in the Blacksburg NWS forecast area is Carter Craigie (Amateur Radio callsign N3AO), e-mail address carter128@verizon.net, telephone 540-250-8184.

Resources

WXSpots Log software: <http://www.wxspots.com/>

Blacksburg NWS Skywarn: <http://www.wx4rnk.org/>

Amateur Radio emergency communications: <http://www.emergency-radio.org/>