

Messages of the Day
June 2013

Saturday, June 1, 2013

The 'ups and downs' of the water cycle - Reference Evapotranspiration (ET) in 2013 . . . 'the up side'

Last year CoCoRaHS launched a new opportunity for our observers to track the water cycle -- the literal "ups and downs" of water so to speak (over 100 observers participated). We are at it again this year. Since our observers already measure precipitation as it arrives at their locations (the down), we thought many would be interested to see how much of this water returns to the atmosphere? This is called evapotranspiration (going back up). For certain CoCoRaHS observers participating in 2013 will be a great opportunity to provide data for a whole new set of applications used in drought monitoring, irrigation and yard watering, remote sensing (satellite) and weather forecasting to name just a few.

There are several qualifications needed to become a CoCoRaHS observer for Reference ET, so don't feel bad if you are unable to participate. There will also be several things to consider on your part as you apply:

- 1) We are looking for "ideal" locations (open exposures with surrounding vegetation that is representative of your area) and highly motivated observers (you have reported on a consistent daily basis for CoCoRaHS over time).
- 2) You are up to the challenge of taking on a more complex daily observation.
- 3) You, or a sponsoring organization are willing to make the substantial investment in purchasing this delicate instrument, the ETgage (which sells for around \$218 at www.weatheryourway.com, plus tax and shipping).

Some of you have already signed up, we thank you for your interest. If you have yet to do so and are up for this challenge, please contact Zach at Info@cocorahs.org with a photo of the site where you will place your gauge and he will follow up with you.

For those of you who want to learn more about Evapotranspiration and the "up side" of the water cycle, please check out the CoCoRaHS ET page at: ["ETo"](#)



**CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar for June 2013:
"Monitoring the Earth's Climate"**

Monitoring the earth's climate will be the focus of our next ["WxTalk Webinar"](#) on June 13th. "*Monitoring the Earth's Climate*" will be presented by Deke Arndt of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center.

Space is limited to the first 500 registrants, so register today! We will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line the following day.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #19 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: "Monitoring the Earth's Climate"

Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013

Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

Monitoring the Earth's climate involves taking today's observations and comparing them with decades to centuries of past observations, and drawing conclusions from these comparisons. At NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, Climate Monitoring is an activity that involves detecting climate change, and designing the indicators that help us do so. But it also involves tracking the week-to-week and month-to-month conditions that more directly impact our lives: drought, heat spells, wet spells in the United States and beyond. This presentation is designed to help CoCoRaHS observers understand about major climate monitoring efforts going on in NOAA, and how their data fits in! We will review the do's and don't's of climate monitoring, and how datasets are used in the process. We'll also look into recent trends and findings about the state of our climate system and how these may or may not relate to climate change."

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [EARTH'S CLIMATE](#)

Our July CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar: "Rainwater Harvesting - Catching and Using It" by Billy Kniffen, Vice President and Education Coordinator for the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association (ARCSA) will take place on July 25th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.

Saturday, June 8, 2013

Two different Webinars the week of June 10th and you're invited!

First Webinar -- A special Webinar this Tuesday about Floods Featuring NASA Scientists.

Here is a special opportunity for educators with CoCoRaHS to hear a live presentation by NASA scientists who are facilitating a field campaign with the Iowa Flood Center. GPM and Iowa Flood Studies are in the midst of a six-week field campaign where scientists use field measurements of rainfall from rain gauges and radar set up across eastern Iowa to improve satellite measurements of precipitation from space and to improve forecast models they use to predict floods.

This webinar will be on Tuesday, June 11th at 7:00 PM Eastern, 6:00 PM Central, 5:00 PM Mountain and 4:00 PM Pacific.

[REGISTER-NASA](#)

More information can be found on the official NASA press release: [Press release](#)

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

Fire Weather . . . Information and Outlooks!

Another zero in the rain gauge? Hot, dry weather during the late spring and summer can create ideal conditions for wildfires in many parts of the country. As you read this message several wildfires are burning throughout the western United States: [ACTIVE FIRES](#).

Most NWS Weather Forecast Offices provide fire forecasts twice a day and provide warnings in close partnership with local, state and federal fire control agencies. Learn more about [Fire Weather](#) and the NOAA Storm Prediction Center's latest [Fire Weather Outlooks](#) for your part of the county by clicking on the underlined text.

The [Incident Information System Website](#) is another great resource for finding out where wildfires are currently burning. This site gives a vast amount of information that many of you will find very informative.

For additional info on wildfire prevention and other wildfire topics, visit the National Interagency Fire Center's web site by clicking here: [NIFC](#)

Want to learn more about Fire Weather? View the CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar presented by Liz Page of UCAR/COMET last July. You can do so by clicking here: [WILDFIRE](#)

Monday, June 17, 2013

June 17th -- CoCoRaHS Day! ... Happy Fifteenth Anniversary!

Monday is CoCoRaHS Day. The CoCoRaHS website was launched June 17, 1998. One hundred beginner weather observers reported that day. We now have close to 20,000 active observers nationwide. Let's celebrate our fifteenth anniversary with everyone sending in their CoCoRaHS daily precipitation reports and setting a new all-time record for most CoCoRaHS reports in one day. Let's shoot for 12,000+ reports and break the record!

For those of you who did not know, the number of reports received each day is listed just above the national map on our home page.

Thanks very much!

Tuesday, June 18, 2013

Observation Notes . . . Daily Comments - CoCoRaHS comments extremely useful in supplementing your data!

One of the great things about the CoCoRaHS web site is that you can include comments about your daily observation when you enter your daily precipitation report each morning under observation notes. These comments are extremely useful in supplementing your data and greatly help others get a more detailed picture of what has taken place during the past 24 hours.

Here are some examples:

From Oklahoma, June 2013: *"Small amount of hail damage and we have tree limbs down. Clean up time today. All in all, thank you to NWS for a calm and accurate prediction that kept a lot of people safe. Your timing for when the storm came through was accurate almost to the minute. This morning is overcast with light breeze and air temp of 67.1F"*

From Florida, May 2013: *"7.49 inches . . . The rain washed the garbage cans down the block!!!"*

From New Jersey, Oct 2012: *"Hurricane Sandy . . . 3.50". Station evacuated, further details to follow."*

From Colorado, June 2013: *"Blast of wind with the few rain drops just made mud drops on the windows and it wasn't enough to streak all the way down the window."*

From Oklahoma, November 2011: *"Felt the 5.6 earthquake here in Edmond around 10:45 PM. Rattled windows and vibrated the floor. Second time in less than 24 hours. A weird sensation I'm not use to."*

From New Hampshire, May 2013: *"stupendous thunderstorm last night - window-rattling blasts all night long. Still drizzling."*

Finally, California, March 2013: *Light rain followed by thundersnow storm around 2 a.m., producing 1/2 inch hail that completely covered the ground. Lasted approx. 1.5 hours."*

You can view a summary of each days reports by clicking on "View Data" from the homepage's top menu bar and then choose "Daily Comments Reports" for a given location and date. Please give this a try with your next observation.

Thursday, June 20, 2013

Are there any improvements in your drought affected areas? . . . Is your pasture green once again?

During the past year we have run several messages asking you to report "drought impacts" in your community. Thank you for your for all the reports we have received.

As the spring has moved along, several of you have started to see slow improvements in areas which have been in drought. Good news indeed!. Those far-off elusive rains have finally come and you are beginning to see a difference. The vegetation is perking up, dust is no longer blowing and that pond out back actually has water in it, with waterfowl to boot. In fact fire danger has subsided, there are no longer watering restrictions in your neighborhood and those pesky mosquitos have started to make a late spring appearance (*drat!*).

If this is the case in your part of the country, we'd love for you to share the visible evidence of how things are improving in your community. Improvements in drought conditions can impact us in many ways. Most positive, some not so much ("*Looks like there's water in my basement again!*" and "*the horse corral is awfully muddy!*") Effects may be associated with agriculture, energy, public health, wildfire and recreation, just to name a few.

Please take a look around your local area this week and think about how the improvement in drought conditions might be impacting it. Then, as a big favor to CoCoRaHS and the National Drought Mitigation Center, file a "[CoCoRaHS Drought Impact Report](#)". It should only take a minute or two. Report what you can, don't let the "monetary impacts" part scare you away. That part is highly desirable, but if you don't know a dollar amount, feel free to skip that part.

Your reports go directly to the National Drought Mitigation Center ([NDMC](#)) and they provide critical information on how drought is impacting the nation. Just like your precipitation reports, drought impact reports help fill in the gaps by providing important "eyewitness information" for your geographic area.

A great resource on drought is the ["Drought Impacts Reporting Resource Page"](#) If you are new to CoCoRaHS please take a moment to look it over, if you've seen it before please take a moment or two to review it.

Thank you for your drought impact reports! We hope that you are able to report some positive improvements!

Sunday, June 23, 2013

Lightning Safety Awareness Week "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!" June 23-29, 2013

The nation will focus on lightning safety this week during National Lightning Safety Awareness Week, June 23-29, 2013.

NOAA states that summer is the peak season for one of the nation's deadliest weather phenomena—lightning. But don't be fooled, lightning strikes year round. The goal of their website is to safeguard U.S. residents from lightning. In the United States, an average of 54 people are killed each year by lightning.

Hundreds of people are permanently injured each year. People struck by lightning suffer from a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms, including memory loss, attention deficits, sleep disorders, chronic pain, numbness, dizziness, stiffness in joints, irritability, fatigue, weakness, muscle spasms, depression, and more.

Lightning is a serious danger. Through their site we hope you'll learn more about lightning risks and how to protect yourself, your loved ones and your belongings. As a start, you can get an overview of Lightning Safety or stop by NOAA's comprehensive page of handouts, brochures, links and more.

To find out more visit: [Lightning Safety Awareness Week](#)

Saturday, June 29, 2013

CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar for July 2013: "Rainwater Harvesting - Catching and Using It"

Rainwater harvesting will be the focus of our next ["WxTalk Webinar"](#) on July 25th. *"Rainwater Harvesting - Catching and Using It"* will be presented by Billy Kniffen of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association (ARCSA).

Space is limited to the first 500 registrants, so register today! We will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line the following day.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #20 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: "Rainwater Harvesting - Catching and Using It"

Date: Thursday, July 25, 2013

Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

"This month's Webinar will discuss the process used to collect rainwater from a rain barrel to whole house to commercial size installations. We will discuss the sizing requirements, conveyance, collection tanks, per-filtration/screening, and delivering the water when needed by bgoth gravity and pump pressure. We will discuss supply and demand and finally use of rainwater for irrigation, pets, wildlife, water features and in-home potable and non-potable use."

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [RAINWATER](#)

Our August CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar: *"Atlantic basin seasonal hurricane prediction and the forecast for the 2013 Atlantic hurricane season"* by Phil Klotzbach and Bill Gray of Colorado State University will take place on August 15th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.