MidWest Tracker

August, 2007

Inside this issue…

Next MidWest Meeting

Dane/Rock County General Meeting on August 20th at 7:00 PM located at the Monona Community Center, 1011 Nichols Rd, Monona, WI

http://www.madison.com/communities/midwestsstrc/events/index.php

Future Meeting Dates

Sept. 17th, Oct. 22nd, Nov. 19th

Welcome!

Dale Bernstein, President/CEO
MidWest 107

Welcome and a heart felt thank you to all of you who support the many goals of MidWest while we continue to serve our communities.

For many years MidWest believed the best course to navigate our community give back, was to stay below the radar, to work from behind the scenes.

As MidWest became more and more involved in our community service, it became readily apparent that it was necessary to increase the public exposure and knowledge of MidWest. This philosophy continues as our membership grows, and as our community, governmental and media networking expand, and so does our knowledge that this philosophy must expand.

With this in mind, we continue to be amazed and gratified by the unbelievable dedication of so many folks within MidWest. I deeply thank each and every one of you for all you do in support of our efforts. At this time however, I would like to single out one special person for whom without his unyielding dedication, MidWest would not be as it is today. That person is Mr. Tim Shriver. Mr. Shriver has been and continues to be a driving force, a stanch supporter, believer and a critical immeasurable factor within and for the operations of MidWest.

Mr. Shriver wears many hats for MidWest. As a fine individual, of his MidWest corporate position as Operations Manager, Board Member, Now Forecaster, MOD, NCO, Relay Operator, Radar Interrupter, for his sharing and teaching of his knowledge and experience with others, his input is invaluable and respected by all those who have had and continue to have the good fortune of being associated with him.

Thank you Tim for all that you do for MidWest, for your unwavering dedication and continued commitment to the goals of MidWest as we continue to serve our communities.

Moving forward, there continues to be a valued and on going discussion of what is the best ingredient with regard to what type supplies, goods and equipment to not only carry on board as we deploy our mobile units, but also with regard to our static personnel as well. I'd like to see this discussion as a regular section within our newsletter. Tell us what you have, what you use, the reasons for your decision, etc.

This is all good discussion within our member Goggle groups. This is one of the reasons why we have such groups, to share information between us.

Hmmmm, item check list and or spotter check list and or carry list, etc. A good topic too and while we are speaking of the newsletter folks, lets all stand up and applaud Steve for doing such an excellent job on one of the finest such newsletters I've ever seen!

Ok, back to the list. As I say, having this topic as a regular feature within the newsletter would be extremely beneficial, in my opinion.

Static or mobile field ops? Are you an MOD, NCO, etc. It all makes a difference. Let's break it down.

Knowledge/Training:
This is the basic item I think we all agree on. One must have the knowledge and dedication to fulfill the task at hand. We also agree that experience is often the best teacher next to training.

TLCS:
The Holy Grail of submitting reports: **TIME, LOCATION, CONDITION, SOURCE.**

Communication:
As we know, our communications during storm events are performed via the MidWest Business Band and or through the MidWest designated Ham radio frequencies. Radio equipment can run the gambit of gear, from around a hundred dollars to hundreds if not thousands of dollars.

For Static Use:
Land line telephone is preferable, backed up by a cell phone, with an extra battery (always consider power outages). Biz Band and or Ham Radio. Know your safe locations.

For Mobile Use:
Let's get down to bare knuckle basics here folks and then we'll move on to the wish list.

What ever vehicle is in use, it must, simply must be D.O.T. legal and road ready. That is the bottom line. What do you do before an event to assure the vehicle is road ready? Share it with the group. Personally, I have a written pre-flight check list. The check list also serves as my preventive maintenance, maintenance and vehicle log. Here is what my check list looks like.

Dale (left) and Tim (right) in front of Dale's 107 unit

MidWest Trivia

Who are the "Twister Sisters?"
Are they *really* sisters?
Answer on page 9

Pre-Flight Check List
MidWest 107 – Ford Explorer

DATE _____ **TIME** _____
MILEAGE START _____ **MILEAGE END** _____

HEADLIGHTS/DRIVING LIGHTS/ROAD LIGHTS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

TAIL LIGHTS/BRAKE LIGHTS/FRONT-REAR TURN LIGHTS/DASH & INTERIOR LIGHTS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

STROBES/WIG WAGS/LIGHT RACK/HORNS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

TIRES/42 PSI/RIMS/BRAKES
OK ☐

REPAIR/INFLATE ☐

COMMENTS _____

ENGINE/DRIVE TRAIN/4 WHEEL DRIVE/OIL/PETRO/FLUIDS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

_____

WINDSHIELD/VEHICLE GLASS/WINDOW OPS/PWR SEATS/WIPERS/FRONT-REAR/FLUID
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS

_____

_____

HEATER/AC/BLOWERS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

RADIOS/VEHICAL-RADIOS-HAM/BIZ BAND/HT/SCANNERS/MONITORS/ANTENNAS/CELL PHONE/BATTERIES/CHARGERS/FREQUENCY LIST/TELEPHONE LIST/CALL LIST
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

POWER WINCH/CHAIN SAW & FUEL
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

FIRST AID/RESCUE/FIRE EXTINGUISHERS/FLASHLIGHTS/SPOTLIGHTS
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

APPAREL/RAIN GEAR/JACKETS/GLOVES/EMERGENCY BLANKETS/DRIVING GLASSES
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

LAPTOP/CAMERAS/MAPS/WRITING MATERIAL/TAPE MEASURE/COMPASS/TIME PIECE STOP WATCH/WX STATION/INVERTER/FIELD GLASSES
OK ☐

REPAIR ☐

COMMENTS _____

FOOD/BEVERAGE/ICE
OK ☐

ITEM LIST _____

ADD ONS

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now granted, that is a long list and of which some might call over kill. Do I use the list every single time I go out? The answer is, for the most part yes. I keep a keen eye on my vehicles operation. From experience I know what and how it is to have a vehicle failure during an event, so I try my best not to let that happen. I run my headlights every time the vehicle starts, I always know if the lighting is not working. I do a walk around at least once a day to assure that all such lights are working. I don't want to be out there with one tail light, one headlight, no turn signals and no brake lights, that's just asking for trouble and in my case of driving such a low profile vehicle, just plain unprofessional.

Now let's get back to you, THE most important component of what we do at MidWest. First and foremost, be safe. Think safe, think ahead, and know where you're at. Make sure someone else knows where you are or where you have gone.

With regard to reporting, if in doubt, don't report. That's a broad statement assured. What I'm trying to get across is that we ***"observe to be sure"***. Yep, use the TLCS. Know your ***Escape Routes***. Look out and up and around and yes down. Why down? Look at the terrain, the crops, observe the movements at various levels. Is it outflow – is it inflow? If you are observing a circular motion, it may be a good time to vacate the area!

When the preverbal substance hits the rotating factor, it's only natural to get excited. Bring it together and take a breath, count to 5 or 10 before you grab that microphone. Remember, there are many eyes and ears upon us, we certainly don't want to start yelling over the air and sounding like many of those we have observed in the various video clips that we have all seen. Remain focused on your safety, of your surroundings. Remain as calm as one can and one will come across in a natural, professional manner. After all, we are good at what we do and we do so in a professional manner. That sets us apart from the many to the few.

MidWest remains dedicated to training, teaching, learning and networking. One person's experience is often another person's training. Never think that one knows all there is to know of what we and others are involved with within the storm community. This can pretty much be said of life in general.

I have seen some good ideas come across the group as to what material is needed to perform the duties that we share. So dig in and chime in folks. Share your thoughts with the group. Throw some good clean humor in if it strikes you. I've often been asked such like "gosh I bet what you do is really exciting!" For which I sometimes answer… "well, it's kind of two fold, so I always bring a newspaper and a roll of TP, 'cause you just never know".

Thank you all for all that you do! Let's be safe out there and don't forget your TLCS.

Oh yes, the wish list. *Mobile Doppler Radar*, my base back up and running, my garage clean, more sleep and less work.

Forward.

db
107
KC9GQS

From The Front Office
Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

Dane *and* Rock County meetings are now held together at the Monona Community Center.

Chat is now available to members on the MidWest SSTRC website.

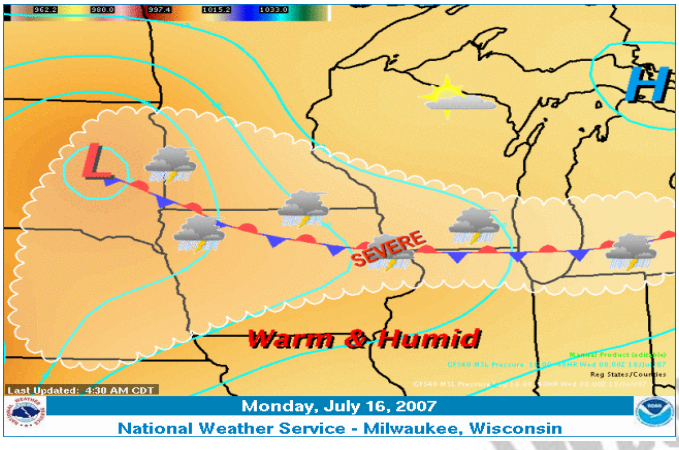
MidWest also has its own forums on the MidWest SSTRC web site at http://www.midwestsstrc.org/membersbbs/
Tim will be posting future outlooks there as well.

New MidWest SSTRC Online Store!
http://www.createchinc.com/store/msstrc/

MidWest has a new online store. Please support MidWest while picking up some cool items!

NWS Weather Story – Something new!

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136



One of the things I like to do everyday is take a look at the new feature called "Weather Story" on the NWS web site. It visually shows visitors at a glance what's going on with weather for the day. To see today's *Weather Story*, just click on the following link or visit the NWS web site. http://www.crh.noaa.gov/wxstory.php?site=mkx

Ladies Night Out (*Next meeting 8/18/2007*)

Heidi Nava, MidWest 131

Sandy and I were talking about ways to get some of the ladies from the group together for a night out and we came up with *Ladies Night Out*. We are holding the next outing on August 18th. We had a lot of fun last time as we talked about the picnic at Bernies, the upcoming Ham class and a lot more. We meet at Pooleys from about 4pm-8pm. About 8 people were there during the last get together and we had such a great time. We will be posting future updates and meeting times on the Google groups. I hope to see more faces at the next meeting.

Wednesday Night Nets!

Check-ins begin at 7pm on the Ham Radio side on 444.375 MHz. Test your equipment!

Then again at 7:30pm on the Business Band side on 451.275MHz. Practice your TLCS!

Net Control

Heidi Nava, MidWest 131

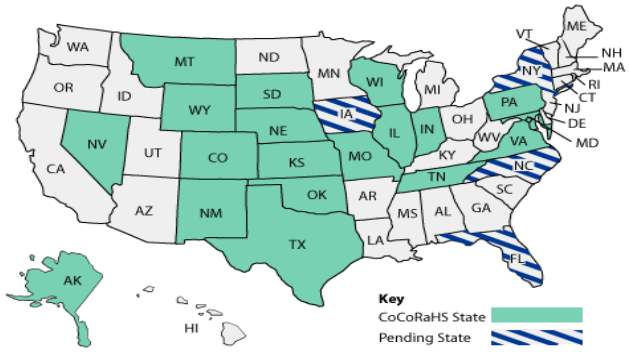
What's it like running *Net Control*? Well when I started doing the Wednesday Night Nets, I was very nervous. But the more I did it, the more comfortable I got. I figured that if I made a mistake I should just keep plugging along because all of us make mistakes now and then. I got into doing the net because I thought this was an area that needed help. Tim was doing a great job and he was doing it most of the time. I thought, I could help him out and get some radio training in too. This is something I think all of us should try. It is a lot of fun and not very hard at all. I started doing a schedule so if anyone wants to give it a shot please e-mail me and I will get you in on the fun. This month's schedule is as follows:

August 1st- Mike MW#147
August 8th- Heidi MW#131
August 15th-Lisa MW#166
August 22nd-Tim MW#122
August 29th – Mike MW#147

We still need volunteers for September on. *Thanks to everyone for helping out!*

Volunteers needed for CoCoRaHS-Wisconsin

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136



CoCoRaHS is an acronym for the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network. CoCoRaHS is a unique, non-profit, community-based network of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow). Would you like to learn more or join? http://www.cocorahs.org/

Lightning Kills Man Beneath Cloudless Sky

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

While a man stood near a tree a lightning bolt struck. It first burned through the tree and then hit him. The sky was clear above him, but a thunderstorm could be heard in the distance. Remember the phrase… *When thunder roars, go indoors!* If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. Lightning safety week was June 24th-30th.

Flying into Thunderstorms

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

Generally not a good idea! For some NASA researchers though, it's an opportunity to try and understand these marvels of Mother Nature and learn what their impact is on Earth's climate. Researchers state that some of these storms can push air up over 60,000 feet into the tropopause and some even further up into the stratosphere. They want to know what kinds of particles are carried up there in those winds.

Scientists are researching this to help understand the effect thunderstorms and cirrus clouds have on global warming. Cirrus clouds reflect sunlight from the Sun, but they also absorb and trap infrared radiation coming from the Earth. Depending on what particles are carried up there, they claim this delicate balance of reflecting sunlight and absorbing infrared radiation can change.

NASA hopes to learn more about the interaction of the particles carried up in these thunderstorms and cirrus clouds, and ultimately what it means for the Earth's climate.

Did You Know? (From NWS website)

Wisconsin's temperature extremes run from a low of -55 degrees to a high of 114. Yikes! Also, every rain drop falling from T-Storm starts as ice or snow.

Night a Tornado Chased *Me*

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

June 23, 2004, 8:30PM - A night many Madison folks will never forget and a night that marks the beginning of storm tracking for one MidWest tracker.

It started out as a beautiful partly sunny summer evening. The sky on Madison's West side though took on an unusually yellowish color. As the evening progressed, more and more clouds rolled in making it darker by the minute. 15 minutes before the tornado hit, the tornado sirens sounded. As I stood out front of my home watching the weather unfold, more and more clouds moved in and soon could be seen moving fast in different directions at different heights with hints of green at the highest levels above me. Then, out of the stillness of the evening, came a loud roar, like the sound of a jet engine as it is taking off coming from just behind the trees northwest from me. Not being able to see it, and with the sound growing louder by the second, I ran inside and for the basement. Just as I entered the house the cable went out, and a fraction of a second later the power went out. Emergency lighting in hand, I made my way to safety.

The next day I learned it was a rain wrapped F1 tornado running on an easterly track parallel to my home, just a couple blocks to my north. It took out many trees along its path of destruction, downed numerous power lines and damaged many homes and businesses. We were without power for a day and a half. Fire and police sirens rang in the total darkness throughout the night. As I walked around the neighborhood the next day I saw the extent of the damage. Huge full 70 year old trees lying on top of homes and crushed cars parked on streets, entire streets blocked by debris and some trees only had a partial trunk left, everything else was stripped off it from the high winds. It's an experience I'll never forget and one that keeps me on the edge whenever severe weather threatens. It was the night a tornado chased me.

MidWest Trivia Answer

Say hello to the *Twister Sisters!* No, they are not really sisters, but they sure are sisters when it comes to tornado chasing. This is a picture of Melanie (left) and Peggy (right).

On top of working at their regular day jobs, during chase season they also work for the local Minneapolis Fox 9 news. During the spring, they teach Basic and Advanced Skywarn classes. They have been in the media and the news nationally and all up and down Tornado Alley.

I recently asked these two tornado chasers what they were up to these days. Peggy replied, first to say hello to us fellow trackers here at MidWest SSTRC, and then said how both of them were keeping very busy. She said they just finished filming a new TV series for WE TV. She said on their second day of filming they chased the incredible Greensburg, KS tornado. They watched it as it formed over Protection, KS and followed it just south of Greensburg. She said it was a horrific event, an EF5 tornado with terrible consequences. Peggy said they will be updating their website with new videos and information about what they are doing. If you want to see any of their latest news clips or buy a video from them, their website is http://www.twistersisters.com/. Thanks Peggy!

Special Note:

After the terrible bridge collapse in Minneapolis on August 1st, I followed up with Peggy and she said both her and Melanie and their families are ok.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those people affected by this terrible tragedy.

New Kind of Weather Alert Radio

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

If you are looking for a new weather alert radio, this new clock radio from Emerson Research might just be your ticket. The radio is AM/FM and S.A.M.E. (Specific Area Message Encoding) capable. It has a battery backup and both sounds an alert and lights the panel when severe weather strikes as well as tunes into the local NWS station. The red message says "Warning", the yellow says "Watch" and the green says "Statement". I picked up mine at Target for $39.95 and have been pretty happy with it.

Would You Like To Be A Ham?

Steve Fitzsimmons, MidWest 136

There is a Ham Radio class now forming for September 29th and 30th. The class is *FREE* and you don't need to learn Morse Code. For more information, please email Don Michalski at dem@sal.wisc.edu .

$ell//Buy/Trade/Barter

Do you have something to sell or are you shopping for a good deal? This is your spot! Just send me a note and I will include it below next month.

Radios for Sale

Frank Weisensel, MidWest 103

If you are interested in buying radio equipment, please write to me at freefallfrank88@juno.com and I will set you up with what you need.

Spotter Safety Do's and Don'ts

Chad Woodward, MidWest 101

Mobile Spotters

1. Have a simple first aid kit and a flashlight.
2. Have a method of communication that you know works in the area you are using it in.
3. Keep a reference card which tells you the location of certain known points.
4. Pick a spotting location that has high visibility in as many directions as possible.
5. Plan an escape route from the location, or locations you are in.
6. SHELTER - Think of sheltering locations on your route.
7. Keep a map (street level) detailing the location(s) you will be spotting.
8. Have a method for receiving alerts (preferably a NOAA all hazards radio).
9. Trace your location by marking a map, or setting automatic waypoints on a GPS unit.

Traffic Hazards

1. Wear your seat belt! Watch out for other drivers.
2. Do not speed.
3. Drive only as fast as conditions allow.
4. Drivers watch the road, not the storm.
5. Front-seat passenger assist driver.
6. Watch for unmarked RR crossings.
7. Do not swerve suddenly to avoid small animals.
8. Avoid Country Roads as much as possible. They may dead end and become extremely slick or impassable when wet. Stick to State, US and prominent County Trunk Highways.
9. Watch out for debris in road or drooping power lines.
10. Do not stray away from your vehicle.
11. Make sure you have a full tank, Do not run low on gas.
12. Do not drive into restricted areas such as military bases. Aside from the potential legal problems, closed gates may trap you.
13. When driving through or near a town that has been hit by a tornado, remember - the power may be out causing traffic disruptions and preventing you from refueling. Be alert for emergency vehicles.
14. Do not drive into smoke or blowing dust that obscures your view. If heavy rain obscures your view, it would be wise to pull over if there is a paved shoulder to avoid being hit from behind.
15. When backing up, have passengers assist you by watching for obstructions.

Power Lines

1. Watch for power lines hanging down across the road (hard to see in poor light).
2. Do not attempt to move "dead" power lines out of the way (because of automatic restart feature). If you must remove a power line from someone, use a long dry tree branch
3. Do not drive over live power lines.
4. If live power lines are in contact with vehicle, stay in vehicle. Do not ground yourself by getting out.

Lightning Hazards

1. Pay attention to approaching areas of lightning.
2. Stay in vehicle if possible.
3. Stay away from wire fences; they carry lightning currents to you.
4. Do not lean on vehicle and act as path to ground.
5. Avoid single trees and being the highest object.
6. If your hair stands up or power lines start crackling, the area is charged and has the potential for a lightning strike. Get in a vehicle or squat on the ground on the balls of your feet.
7. Tripods can shock you due to ground currents.
8. Take a CPR class. Often people can be revived by either rescue breathing or both rescue breathing and CPR to start the heart.

Miscellaneous Hazards

1. Snakes, particularly on shoulders of road.
2. Chiggers, mosquitoes, bees.
3. Dress for all weather contingencies.

Flash Flood Hazards

1. Do not drive into running water unless you are certain that you can get across.
2. Stay alert for flooding, especially after dark (the worst time). Listen to car radio for watches and warnings.
3. Check for road and bridge closings. We will avoid areas already saturated by previous heavy rainfalls.
4. Watch for washed-out roads and bridges.
5. If your vehicle gets stuck, get out and head for higher ground. Remember most people who die in flash floods are in cars.
6. Stay out overnight if necessary.
7. Watch out for snakes flushed out of their habitat.

Storm Hazards

1. Do not crowd other vehicles. Act professionally at all times. Be a team player.
2. Do not get disoriented.
3. Have an escape route.
4. Do not come into the mesocyclone from the wrong direction (through the core or a thick hook echo). Stop, if necessary, to let the mesocyclone cross the road ahead of you.
5. Do not get under wall clouds.
6. Watch out for tornadoes in the rain. Many end their lives in rain, or re-emerge from rain after being engulfed in it. Be alert for sparse large hail, spiraling rain curtains, rotating scud clouds, rotation in the cloud base, debris, the sound of a tornado or your ears popping; all indications that you have managed somehow to get yourself in the wrong spot.
7. Do not get caught in the new mesocyclone core (look overhead), while watching a tornado in the occluded core.
8. Get out of the way of rapidly propagating gust fronts as the storm collapses.
9. Watch out for gustnadoes as you pass through the gust front.
10. Remember that heavy debris is thrown around the right sides and far ahead of violent tornadoes, so don't get too close.
11. Remember that tornadoes in your viewfinder look further away that they actually are.
12. Err on the side of caution. We don't need people almost in the tornado circulation. The last thing we need are dead or injured "heroes" or loose cannons out there. If you don't respect tornadoes, go on a F4 or F5 damage survey with the NWS!
13. If a tornado overtakes you (this shouldn't happen), get out of your vehicle, lay down in a ditch, hang onto something and protect your head.
14. On restricted access, divided highways (interstates and turnpikes), bridges become storm shelters. Be very wary that traffic may come to a halt as people scramble for safety. While an overpass may shield you from hail, they normally offer no real protection from a strong tornado.

As the Mesocyclone Approaches

1. Park safely. Do not stop on a soft shoulder.
2. Keep the engine running. Your peripheral equipment requires power at all times and the battery can be drained quickly causing the engine to not restart.
3. Do not get caught in a town.
4. Do not get trapped at a RR crossing by a passing train, or in a construction zone.
5. Be aware if you are on a divided highway (e.g. Interstate) that you cannot easily turn around. Use frontage roads to the extent possible for intercept work.
6. Always be cognizant of your escape route.

Picture of Chad (left) and Tim (right)

What Does A Tornado Do?

George E. Hrabovsky
(*MidWest 299*)
President, Madison Area Science and Technology (MAST)

We all know what a tornado is. There is a great deal of speculation as to what the cause of a tornado is. There is an even deeper mystery, "What does a tornado accomplish by its existence?" Put another way, "What does a tornado do?"

Lately, I have been pondering a mystery of nature, of which a tornado is one manifestation; that is the phenomena called turbulence. Turbulence is an interesting phenomenon that is really difficult to describe. When you boil water and it begins to roll over, the act of transferring heat energy from the spots where the bubbles form to the entire water supply in the pan is an example of turbulence. Wind blowing past a building and causing a small eddy that lifts leaves into the air; taking energy from a larger scale to a smaller scale. In short, turbulence accomplishes two things: It causes a fluid flow (such as water or air) to become more complicated, and it takes energy out of one scale (the portion of the bottom of a pan being heated, or a building-scale wind flow) and redistributes it to another (the entire pan, or the ground near a building). How this happens in unknown.

About 150 years ago a Frenchman named Navier proposed a set of equations which are basically…

Acceleration of a fluid + Divergence of velocity of the fluid = Interaction of viscosity of the fluid with velocity - change in pressure with location.

This simplified form hides all of the nasty mathematics that makes the equation impossible to solve without approximations (this is one reason why it is so difficult to predict the weather). It is believed that within this deceptively simple-looking equation is the secret of turbulence.

Acceleration is simply a change in speed and/or a change in direction. To a physicist, deceleration is just another kind of acceleration. The combination of speed and direction is velocity. Divergence is the rate of change of something with respect to where you are. Viscosity is understood to be the stickiness of a fluid, and the tendency to produce friction.

We do know that turbulence often (if not always) manifests as some sort of vortex. Its relationship to tornadoes is thus fairly straightforward, if not its true role. We do not know if the tornado is a result of energy transfer from the storm scale to the micro-scale, or vice-versa, or even if this plays a role in the formation of tornadoes; it could be an accidental side-occurrence. It could be that flows within a storm simply interact in such a way to become complicated in a way that produces a tornado.

Thus, the mystery of turbulence holds out a promise and a threat. The promise is the possibility that one mechanism in the formation of tornadoes will be revealed. The threat is that tornadoes may be a unique phenomena, that is each tornado may be caused by different flow interactions, and that tornado forecasting may never get much better than it is now.

Birth of a Tornado - MSNBC Slide Show
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9007188

Member Notes & Events

MidWest SSTRC is looking for a new Secretary and Membership Coordinator. Anyone interested in helping fill these positions please contact Dale. Many thanks and appreciation to Mr. Dan Starker for his years of service in these positions!

Mike, MidWest 147, is planning on taking a training class given by Tim Vasquez. The more people who sign up for the training, the lower the costs will be. For more information please refer to our message forums. Class will be held in Texas.

MidWest SSTRC is working on an exciting behind the scenes tour for this fall. But due to its expected overwhelming popularity, it will only be made available to our *active* members. Is your membership active? The tour location is a *secret*!

What's Your Story?

What events in your life grabbed your interest in weather or in storm tracking?

Rusty Kapela, Warning Coordination Meteorologist…

I was in 5th grade. Our teacher assigned us a weather project that involved reading the newspaper forecasts, watching the TV meteorologist, and writing a summary report on what we learned about weather forecasting. I ended up logging the observed weather each day at about 6 pm, just before the newscasts. Funny thing is....I never stopped....I was hooked. By the time I was in 7th grade, I had pretty much made up my mind that it was going to be "weather or not." Of course, I was fascinated by all the sciences at an early age, and loved math. Then I heard about this "Badger" thing from UW-Madison. The rest is history. ..*Rusty*

Upcoming Events

August 11th Dairyland Dare
August 13th, ARES Hospital Drill
August 18th, Ladies Night Out
Sept. 29&30th, Ham Radio Class
Oct. 27&28 Wisconsin ARES/RACES

What Trackers Are Reading Lately

Storm Chaser's Handbook, by Tim Vasquez
F5, by Mark Levine
Tornado Alley, by Howard Bluestein

Please Visit the *New* MidWest Online Store!

Dale Bernstein, President/CEO
MidWest 107

We are excited to announce the Grand Opening of a *new* MidWest Online Store which may be visited at www.createchinc.com/store/msstrc.
The www.createchinc.com/store/msstrc link may also be found at the www.midwestsstrc.org web site.

I have been working with our online store provider to bring those interested members and supporters of MidWest, quality products at a reasonable cost. The goal was to enable those who purchase such products a means of not only availing themselves to such quality goods, but also to provide an opportunity of knowing that such purchases help support our efforts as we continue to serve our communities.

In working with our online store provider, Createch, it has been a pleasure conducting business with such a professional, positive and community focused company.

Createch is based out of Kimberly Wisconsin and like MidWest, is focused on getting the job done right, from the largest corporation to the smallest organization, they value each professional relationship.

Don't forget our other online store, Café Press, which will continue to have a link on our web site, www.midwestsstrc.org.

So take a tour and enjoy!

Storm Based Weather Warnings

Skip Voros, Executive Director, Milwaukee Area Skywarn Assoc.

The National Weather Service currently issues and disseminates warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, and flash floods using county or parish boundaries. In order to improve the specificity and accuracy of warnings for these hazards, the NWS will implement *Storm-Based Warnings* on October 1, 2007. Although entire county warnings are possible with some storms, the warned area (in the shape of a polygon) will now mark the greatest threat area and not be restricted to geopolitical boundaries. Thus areas not affected by the storm's path do not get warned.

Storm-Based Warnings will promote improved graphical warning displays, and in partnership with the private sector, support a wider warning distribution through cell phone alerts, pagers, web-enabled PDA (Personal Data Assistants), etc. Audio and text warning formats (NOAA radio, e-mail, TV screen) will include more specific geographic or landmark wording. See http://www.weather.gov/sbwarnings/ The warned areas are also outlined on radar at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ridge/index_lite.htm during severe weather situations.

Educational Links

For information on training and certifications please visit the following web sites…

1. **FEMA:** http://training.fema.gov (ICS 100/700)
2. **MAST:** http://www.madscitech.org
3. **JetStream:** Online school for weather (NWS)
http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/jetstream/matrix.htm

Why Have Weather Spotters?

Peggy K., Secretary, Milwaukee Area Skywarn Assoc.

Because the Warren County Iowa community of Cumming does not have tornado sirens or an emergency management plan according to Des Moines TV station WHO.

Because current Doppler radar technology cannot determine the size of hail stones. Rare and confirmed 5.5 inch stones fell in Wisconsin's Wood County on June 7th causing major damage to homes and cars.

Because communication lines go down. On June 27th a large part of Oswego county New York lost cell, landline, cable TV, and 9-1-1 center contact when a fiber cable was damaged. 20-thousand people were without communications for many hours.

Because spotters only call 9-1-1 to make a report. During a July 16th tornado warning for Jefferson County, Iowa, the 9-1-1 center answered almost 100 calls in 45 minute period. Is the tornado siren being tested?

Was there a real tornado? Where was it? Is it safe to leave the shelter? This prevented dispatchers from handing other real emergencies. Firmly committed spotters always have alternate means of obtaining weather information (as should the public), and they play KEEP-UP – and not CATCH-UP.

Because many trained spotters are ham radio operators with backup power and two-way radio contact with the weather service. On July 28th a phone outage at the Northern Indiana weather service office prevented storm reports from being received. Spotter reports had to be relayed to and from local law enforcement.

MidWest SSTRC Inc. Mission Statement

The MidWest Severe Storm Tracking/ Response Center (*MidWest SSTRC Inc.*) is comprised of members whose primary purpose is to assist in providing early detection of severe weather. We communicate this critical information to government officials, other recognized agencies and organizations including the National Weather Service allowing for timely public severe weather warnings and providing emergency response as appropriate. *MidWest SSTRC Inc. endeavors to assist in any way it can in the protection if life and property from any threat, be it natural or man made.* MidWest SSTRC Inc. is a 501c3 Non-Profit Corporation

2007 Stats		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	Dane	0	0	2	0	1	2	2					
	Rock	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	1				

Wisconsin	Average	2004	2005	2006	2007 (as of July)
Tornado Stats	21	36	62	13	16

MidWest Tracker is a monthly publication of the MidWest Severe Tracking & Response Center, Inc. Your comments are always welcome. Please send any comments and suggestions to Dale Bernstein at dale.bernstein@midwestsstrc.org or Steve Fitzsimmons at midwestnewslettereditor@midwestsstrc.org. Thank you!