

MidWest Tracker



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Visit us at <http://www.midwestsstrc.org>

A Newsletter of MidWest Severe Storm Tracking/Response Center, Inc.

Space Science & Engineering Center

MidWest members and their guests were invited to a special tour

Global Warming & Super Storms

Is there a connection?

Winter Storms - The Deceptive Killer

Link to how to stay safe this winter season

2011 Makes History

Which records fell?

Rusty's Roundup

Rusty Kapela reflects on 2011

MidWest Holiday Party

December 27th, 6PM



Dale Bernstein, President/CEO
MidWest SSTRC, Inc.

Welcome to the MidWest Tracker Newsletter!

First and foremost, I want to thank each and every member of MidWest for their unending duty, of which they give back to the many communities of which we serve.

Once again the days of winter and years end are upon us. 2011 has been no different than years past, as MidWest and our service commitments continue to grow. There are many folks who continue to be amazed and gratified of the outstanding dedication of all our members. The tough duties of our MOD, AMOD, NCO, County Ops Managers, DAT, Board Members, Officers, assigned positions and members have been met and those duties have been diligently carried out time and time, and time again.

Spring, 2011 took us from planning to multiple participation's in the NWS

spotter classes and programs in multiple Wisconsin counties. We look forward to increased MidWest participation as we begin our planning for the 2012 classes and possible MidWest Severe Weather Seminar.

As we know, participation or hosting such weather classes and or seminars reflects a high degree of planning, resources, and execution.

The MidWest Community Outreach Program was in full swing with requested presentations from companies, corporations, Boy Scouts of America, community groups, the University of Wisconsin and the Madison Area Technical College, to name a few. Each year we see an increase in such requests and involvement *(A brief summary of our latest talk appears later in this newsletter).*



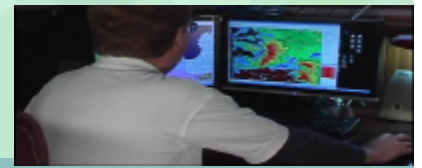
This year MidWest was honored with a NWS, Dane County, Wisconsin, Public Service Award which was received on behalf of all

MidWest members. Although we seek no awards for our community service, MidWest is deeply honored for being selected and we thank those agencies and persons whom made that possible.

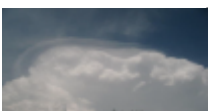
The threat of tornadoes is

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foremost in our minds. In 2011, Wisconsin documented 38 tornadoes, with two happening literally in Madison's backyard. The 30 year average for Wisconsin tornadoes was also raised from 21 to 23. These events reinforce the need for organizations such as MidWest, to provide critical




Cover: Can anyone remember what type of cloud this is? Hint: It has a "Halo". This is common with strong updrafts. MidWest 136 took this picture just as one inch hail was falling in Sun Prairie. Answer: A Pileus cloud. Would you like to see your picture on the front page? Send it in!

severe storm information and support as requested.

As of this newsletter, the Severe Storm Predication Center has put the [Preliminary Tornado Count](#) at 1,884, a number that if it becomes actual would break the record for most tornadoes ever recorded for one year. Yes, that's One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-Four. That's up from the 2010 preliminary count of 1,543. The SPC has the 2011 [Preliminary Killer Tornado](#) count at 59, up from the 2010 count of 21.

The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) website states:



“WITH 552 DIRECT TORNADO FATALITIES... 2011 IS NOW THE 2ND DEADLIEST YEAR ON RECORD (TIED WITH 1936). 1925 REMAINS THE DEADLIEST YEAR FOR U.S. TORNADOES WITH OVER 700 FATALITIES REPORTED.”

For more detailed and up to date information, please refer to the SPC website: <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/torn/fataltorn.html>

While I believe any loss is a tragedy, I also firmly believe that the fatalities, injuries and property damage would have been that much greater had it not been for those early warnings, critical storm information and responses

from organizations such as MidWest that were able to provide to those agencies and communities that we serve.

In 2012, we'll continue to strive to be the best, as we plan for increased training in such areas as: Forecasting, Radar Interpretation, Boundary Detection and Convective Initiation, Precipitation and Flash Flooding, and Disaster Assessment to name just a few.



The MidWest Disaster Assessment Team (DAT) saw several call-outs for 2011 including the now infamous Lake Monona Water Spout of Aug 8th. While the debate goes on as to a Water Spout vs. a Tornado Over Water, the event placed to rest the myth that the Madison lakes protect the area against tornadoes. There are those of us who remember the Stoughton tornado path directly over lake water.

The MidWest D.A.T. will continue to train, both in classroom and in the field in 2012. We also look forward to expanding our mutual interest with the Wisconsin Civil Air

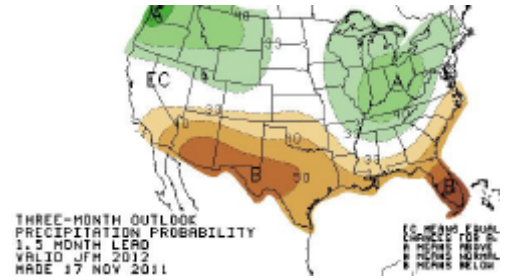
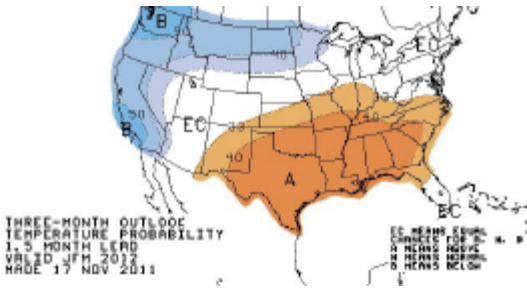
Patrol and other aerial assessment opportunities.

We look forward to strengthening our on-going relationships with local media and increasing public awareness regarding warnings of severe weather events. We appreciate the professional communication means of these additional resources as we continue to serve our communities. MidWest also deeply appreciates the professional associations we have with the National Weather Service, Federal, State, County and Local agencies in which work with.



As always, we deeply “Thank You”, the volunteer, the MidWest member for all that you do and for your community commitment. In closing, as we approach the Holiday Season and the close of 2011 -- Some of you may choose to wish a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Seasons Greetings, Happy Holidays or some other holiday phrases.

I personally believe a sincere holiday wish, greeting or phrase is just that, sincere. So I wish you all the best of the holidays, no matter your choice



Happy Holidays from our homes to yours. May 2012 be your BEST year yet.



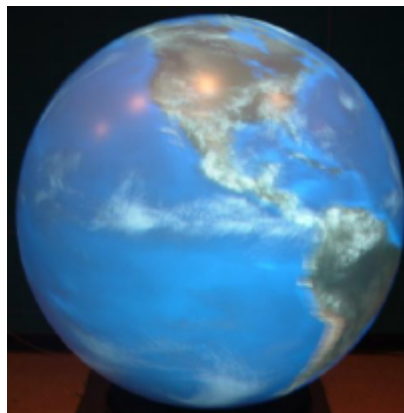
of celebration, of reflection. I wish you the best. This past year has brought us many joys and sorrows as the New Year will too. Yet, as it is soon time to bid farewell to 2011, we shall each keep in mind those times to remember as we welcome the new opportunities and challenges of 2012. Be well, be safe and thank you for all you do. Sincerely,

D. Bernstein
President/CEO



On Saturday, November 12th, at 10AM MidWest spotters and their guests were invited to attend a special tour of the

[UW Space Science and Engineering Center.](#)



In the Globe Room, we tracked hurricanes as they formed off the African coast. We followed jet streams, gulf streams, and storms. We even watched in compressed time the growing and shrinking polar ice every year and various weather satellites orbiting the planet.

We have invited Margaret, our tour guide, to demonstrate this amazing globe at a future MidWest meeting.



EVENTS:

We are having our annual **Holiday Party** on December 27th at 6PM. Those interested are invited to contact Dale. Please bring a dish to pass and enjoy!



Next Meeting of MidWest SSTRC Inc.
DANE * IOWA * ROCK
Monday January 15, 2012
1011 Nichols Road, Monona, WI
General Meeting 7:00 PM
DAT/MOD Meeting 6:00 PM
**** WE NEED YOU! ****

MidWest is looking for spotters, relay operators and MODs. We will train you.

H E L P F U L
Links

1. [NWS Spotter Page](#)
2. [MidWest Training Resources](#)
3. [Milwaukee SkyWarn](#)
4. [MAST](#)
5. [Tornado Summaries \(SPC\)](#)
6. [MidWest SSTRC Store](#)
7. [MidWest Cafe Press Store](#)
8. [Jetstream - NWS Training](#)



Mark Your Calendar



Flood Awareness Week
Mar 12-16, 2012

Severe Weather Awareness Week
Apr 16-20, 2012

Tornado Drill:
Apr 19, 2012

Lightning Safety Week
Jun 24-30, 2012

Heat Awareness Day
Jun 14, 2012

NOAA All Hazard Radio Awareness
May 9, 2012

Winter Weather Week
Nov 5-9, 2012

[Weather Calendar](#)
Courtesy of NWS



More pictures from our tour.



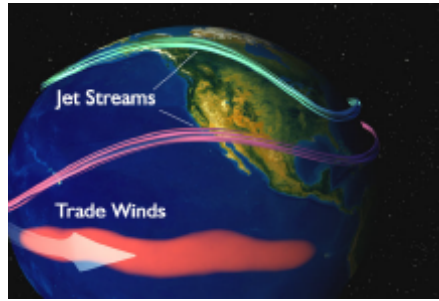
Here's a group picture on the roof of those who could attend.



After the tour, some of us were invited to participate in a focus group. Look at this cool web site: [NOAA Climate Services](http://www.noaa.gov/climate)



This is a picture of our most gracious tour guide, Margaret. Thanks Margaret!



Is Global Warming Creating Super Storms?

Steve Fitzsimmons, Editor

Two researchers, professor Jonathan Martin and graduate student Andrew Winters from the University of Wisconsin's Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Department discussed the effects of global winds at a scientific conference held in San Francisco December 6th and 7th.

Their research shows when thunderstorms over Indonesia push the subtropical jet stream north into the polar jet stream, the "Coupling" of the two jet streams creates a "SuperJet". This superjet can be linked to the historic and deadly tornado outbreak in the Southeast this past April and the 20 inch rains that fell in Nashville in 2010. If their research proves correct, they say we may see more of these events.

If there is any good news, it's that forecasters will have between seven and ten days advance notice as this superjet is formed almost 9,000 miles away. They suspect global warming may be behind this.

To read the full article, please click the link below.

<http://www.physorg.com/news/2011-12-global-tornadoes.html>

Wednesday Night Nets



1 Check-ins begin at 7:00 PM on the Ham Radio side on 444.375, 444.750 and 444.575 Mhz. *Practice reporting in TLCS format.*

2 Check-ins begin at 7:30 PM on the Business Band side on 451.275 Mhz. *Practice reporting in TLCS format. Test your radios.*

3 **Time:** The time of event.
Location: Where you are reporting from.
Condition: What are you reporting.
Source: Your call sign.

Example: At 7:05 PM, two miles south of the Madison Ref point, Dane County, Clear, MidWest 136, KC9IAR.

Cool Web Sites

[Dr. Sky](#)

[World Sunlight Map](#)

[Scale of the Universe](#)

[3D Solar System](#)

December Lunar Eclipse

On Sunday morning, December 11th, we saw a partial Lunar Eclipse





Rusty Kapela,
Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) WFO Milwaukee

Rusty's Roundup

As 2011 quickly comes to a close, the Milwaukee/Sullivan NWS Office extends a **BIG** thanks to all of its partners for another successful weather year. We couldn't have done our job without your help! In a year of weather extremes, Wisconsin had a minimal number of weather-related fatalities and injuries thanks to your assistance!

The year featured a historic blizzard February 1-2nd, known as the Groundhog Blizzard. On these two days, 12 to 26 inches of snow fell with winds gusts of 40 to 60 mph. Drifts grew to 10 to 15 feet in some locations of southern Wisconsin and some roads were closed. Even emergency first-responders couldn't reach some stranded motorists. Amazingly, only one person died from exposure during the blizzard! People must have paid attention to the forecasts and warnings!

Of course, Wisconsin had to endure another weather extreme – known as a heat wave. A long-duration, 4-day heat wave affected the state during the period of July 17-21st with heat index values of 100 to 117. There were only 5 directly-related fatalities, thanks to a 3-day advance notice by the NWS, and preparedness efforts of state, county, and local officials in conjunction with excellent media coverage.

Preliminary	2011
EF0	13
EF1	17
EF2	7
EF3	1
EF4	0
EF5	0
Total	38

Wisconsin had a busy tornado season with most of them affecting central and northern areas. A total of 38 were documented, including 8 strong tornadoes. Only 1 directly-related fatality and 5 directly-related injuries occurred. Considering the number of tornadoes was well over the new 30-year average of 23, it could have been worse. Most of the tornadoes spun up on April 10th and May 22nd. Altogether, there were 10 calendar days with tornadoes in Wisconsin. More details can be found on this web page: http://www.crh.noaa.gov/news/display_cmsstory.php?wfo=mkx&storyid=69471&source=0

	Fatalities	Injuries
Blizzard	1	0
Excessive Heat	5	108
Lightning	1	0
Tornado	1	6
Thunderstorm Wind	1	10
Flood	1	0
Total	10	124

For the year, Wisconsin had only 10 directly-related fatalities and about 124 injuries (heat illness – medical treatment).

The majority of these were associated with the long-duration July 17-21st heat wave.

Total 2011 property and crop losses in Wisconsin due to tornadoes, severe thunderstorm winds, and hailstorms was over \$103 Million. Below is the breakdown.

Tornado Property	\$50,963,000
Tornado Crop	\$91,000
Thunderstorm Wind Property	\$9,855,000
Thunderstorm Wind Crop	\$4,461,000
Hail Property	\$33,961,000
Hail Crop	Unknown
Lightning	\$2,398,000
Heat*	\$76,000
Flood/Flash Flood Property	\$479,000
Non-Tstm Strong/High Wind	\$542,000
Winter Storm Property**	\$304,000
Total	\$103,610,000

In late April, 2011, severe storms and tornadoes struck Missouri and the Gulf Coast States. After many years with low number of tornado-related fatalities in the U.S., things went

through the roof in 2011, even though there were good tornado warning lead times. At least 748 tornadoes spun up in April alone, resulting in 361 deaths. For all of 2011 through August 30th, the U.S. experienced 1,543 tornadoes and a related 552 fatalities.

Could there be a lot of tornado-related deaths/injuries in Wisconsin? Yes. Are all Wisconsin residents "StormReady?" No. I think we would see fewer fatalities and injuries in Wisconsin, tornado-pound for tornado-pound, because more of our homes and buildings have basements, we have fewer mobile homes, and preparedness efforts by everyone. Our weather preparedness in Wisconsin is pretty good, but there is room for improvement.

Refer to the following web pages to enhance your preparedness.

<p>StormReady</p> <p>Weather-Ready Nation Announcement</p> <p>Weather-Ready Nation Document</p> <p>ReadyWisconsin</p>	<p>Severe Weather Reference</p> <p>What do You Know About Wind-Resistant Buildings</p> <p>FEMA – Safe Rooms</p>
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*** Special Note: Dual Polarization coming to Sullivan in April, 2012 ***



2011 Makes History

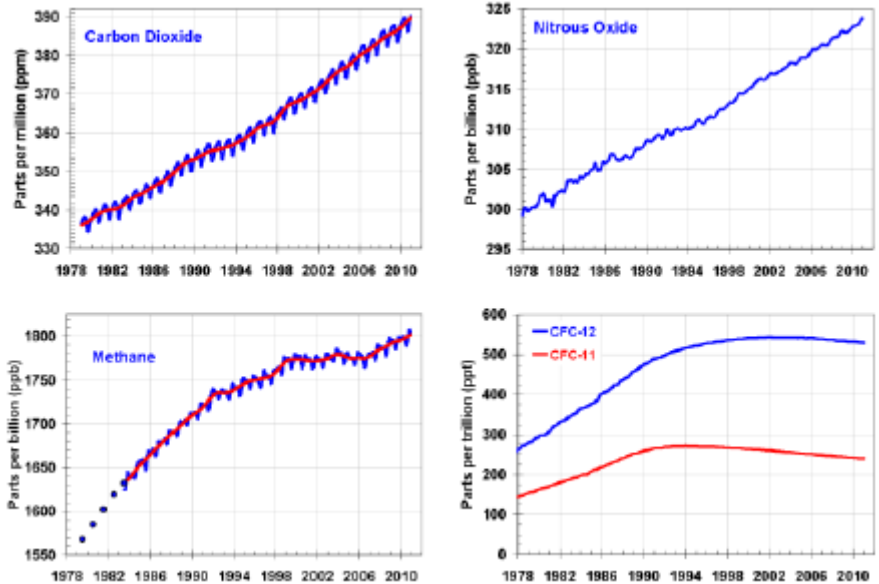
1. [Second Highest Number Recorded Tornado Deaths](#)
2. [Record Breaking Billion Dollar Plus Disasters](#)
3. [Most Number of Tornadoes](#) (based on preliminary numbers)

Prepare for 2012



1. Do you have a weather alert radio? Is it on and ready to alert you to threats? Do your loved ones have one?
2. Do you have an emergency plan? Do you practice? Do you have emergency supplies?
3. Are you keeping your spotting and reporting skills sharp? Do you participate in the Wednesday Night Nets as often as you can? Do you attend MidWest meetings and training events?

Greenhouse Gases Continue to Rise as CFC's Drop



Winter Storms - The Deceptive Killer

(Because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm)



Winter Deaths - Related to ice and snow:

About 70% occur in autos, about 25% are people caught out in the storm.

Related to exposure to cold:

50% are people 60+ years. Over 75% males. About 20% occur in the home.

NWS WINTER STORM SURVIVAL KIT - CAR:

- blankets/sleeping bags; flashlight with extra batteries; first-aid kit; knife;
- high-calorie, non-perishable food; extra clothing to keep dry; a large empty can and plastic cover with tissues and paper towels for sanitary purposes;
- a smaller can and water-proof matches to melt snow for drinking water; sack of sand (or cat litter); shovel; windshield scraper and brush; tool kit; tow rope; booster cables; water container; compass and road maps.

Keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Try not to travel alone. Let someone know your timetable and primary and alternate routes.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/wntrstm.htm>

