

New Point and Click Icons

Product Description

Document (PDD)

February 27, 2014

Part 1 - Mission Connection

a. Product Description - Currently, icons used to depict forecast weather conditions on NWS' Point Forecast Pages are matched to the Zone Forecast Product based on a "*most hazardous* weather" philosophy. As a result, the weather conditions depicted via these icons are not always representative of the most current conditions. In addition, the icons do not currently depict existing weather hazards.

As a means to address this fact, and to enhance the clarity of the icons, the following enhancements are proposed to identify and display changing weather conditions during individual 6-hour periods out to Day 4:

- Provide new icons designed to be more visually discernable,
- Use dual, 6-hourly icons (i.e. "morning sun then afternoon showers") for those 12-h periods where changing weather conditions dictate the need for increased temporal specificity,
- Create new text phrases for the dual icons to describe these changing weather conditions as needed, and
- Add yellow, red and orange blocks around the icons to indicate when Watches, Warnings and Advisories (WWAs), respectively, are in effect.

Notes:

- Due to space limitations, the new phrases under the icons and for the WWA color blocks will sometimes need to be shortened (e.g., "mostly sunny" becomes "sunny"). However, the full phrasing will still be available via mouse-over, as with the currently operational Point Forecast pages.
- For most quiescent weather scenarios, dual icons will generally not be used.

b. Purpose - The new icons are intended to enhance communication of rapidly changing weather conditions, while also highlighting current weather hazards.

c. Audience - The audience includes NWS partners, the public, emergency managers, the media, academia, and other users who view NWS' Point Forecast Pages to view the latest forecasts.

d. Presentation Format - The icons will be split for each 12-h period with new text phrases when weather conditions warrant a significant change. Yellow, red and orange blocks around the icons will appear to indicate when Watches, Warnings and Advisories, respectively, are in effect.

e. Feedback Method - A Public Information Statement (PNS) will be issued linking to a static web link, providing examples of the changes proposed. A public comment period will be in effect until March 28, 2014 to enable users to respond to the proposed changes.

The NWS will review the comments and determine whether or not to implement the proposed changes. Another PNS will be issued if a decision is made to implement, along with the scheduled date for implementation.

Part II – Technical Description

a. Format and Science:

- The proposed new icons can be accessed at this link:

<http://innovation.srh.noaa.gov/newicons/icons.html>

- Sample “current” and “proposed new” icons are provided in the Attachment.

b. Product Availability – The current icons (and any revisions to them based on the comments received) can be accessed for each NWS Forecast Office via the NWS’ Point Forecast Page.

c. Additional Information - Please contact:

Eli Jacks
National Weather Service
Office of Climate Water and Weather Services
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Elliott.Jacks@noaa.gov

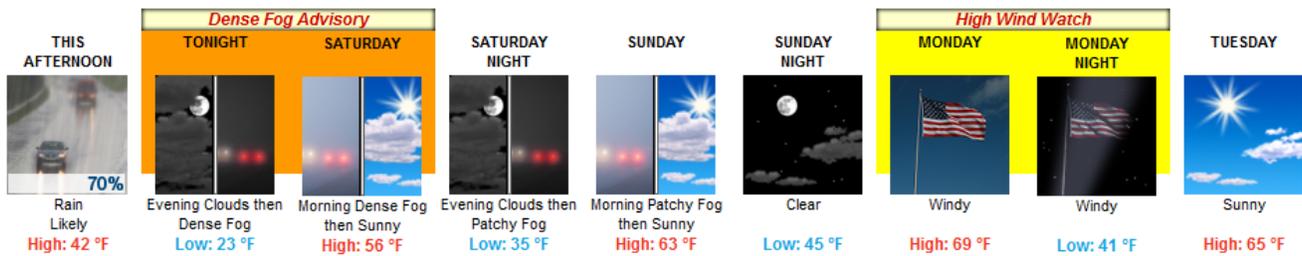
Point Forecast Icon Examples for Public Comment

Example 1: Dense Fog is expected - but *only* during the late night and early morning hours Tonight into Saturday. A “Dense Fog Advisory” is issued for this period and a “High Wind Watch” is also issued for Monday and Monday Night.

Current Icons:

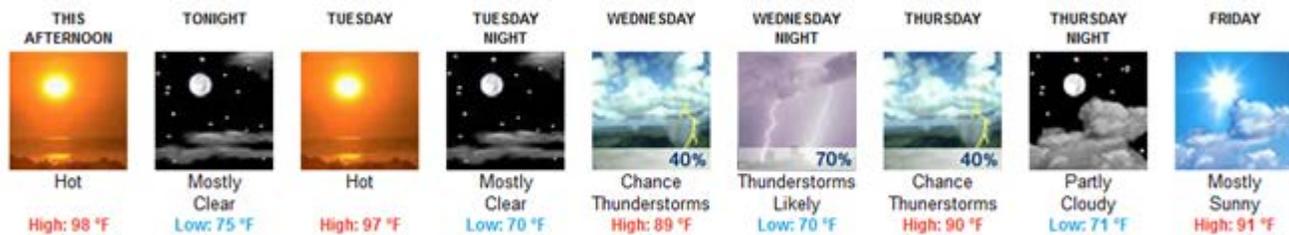


Proposed New Icons:

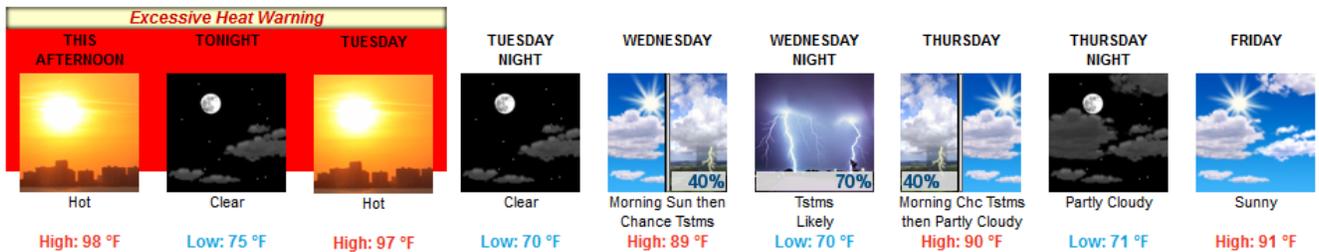


Example 2: There is a chance for thunderstorms on Wednesday afternoon extending into Thursday morning, but no thunderstorms are expected either Wednesday morning or Thursday afternoon. An “Excessive Heat Warning” is issued for This Afternoon through Tuesday.

Current Icons:

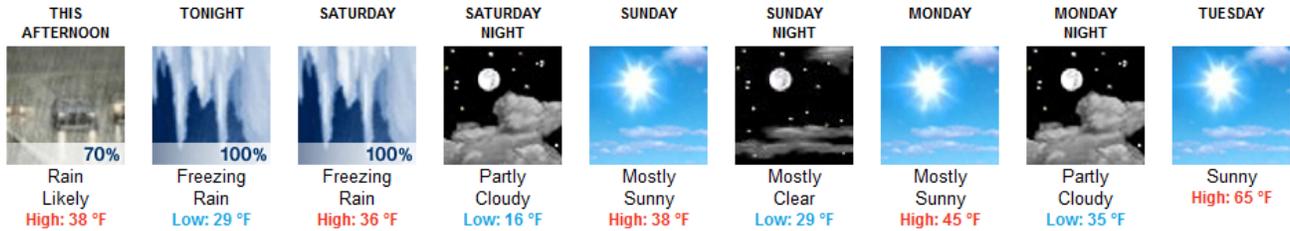


Proposed New Icons:



Example 3: Depicts a rain/freezing Rain event where the rain changes to freezing rain late in the Tonight period and then back to rain on Saturday. A “Freezing Rain Advisory” is issued for late Tonight and Saturday morning.

Current Icons:

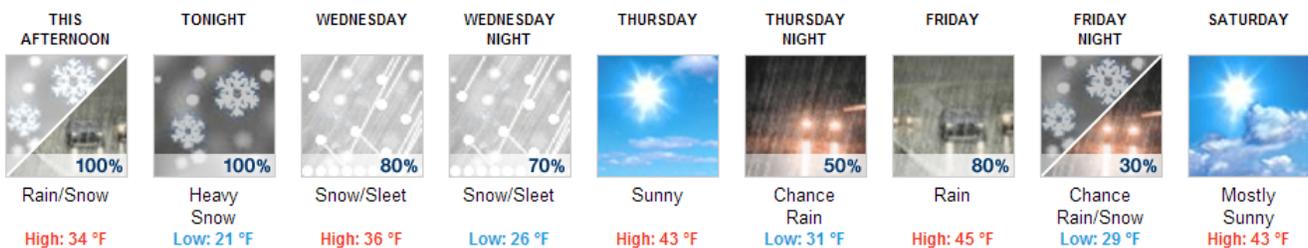


Proposed New Icons:



Example 4: Depicts a case where snow is expected Tonight, and then snow mixed with sleet is expected through Wednesday evening, but the probability of each varies markedly within their respective 12-hour periods. Also depicts proposed new “mixed rain and snow” icons for This Afternoon and Friday Night and a new “snow mixed with sleet” icon for Wednesday evening.

Current Icons:



Proposed New Icons:

