

The comments below are my personal opinions and are not being submitted on behalf of the National Weather Service.

I would like to express my strong support for the establishment of three new EAS event codes; Extreme Wind Warning (EWW); Storm Surge Watch (SSA); and Storm Surge Warning (SSW). Since being established in 2004, the EWW has been issued as a Tornado Warning (TOR) as there currently is no other high priority way to disseminate the critical weather warning. While using the Tornado Warning has served the purpose of disseminating the EWW, it can lead to confusion with an actual tornado and needs its own EAS code to help protect lives when a major hurricane is approaching landfall.

Most lives are lost during hurricanes due to Storm Surge. The National Weather Service plans to begin issuing Storm Surge Watches and Warnings for the first time in 2016 to better warn those in coastal zones of the great threat to life and property posed by imminent storm surge. Having EAS codes to specifically address this significant danger is paramount to helping reduce fatalities.

Given that most citizens possess smart phones and with the recent expansion of the DHS Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) System which sends critical weather warnings direct to mobile phones, the new EWW, SSA, and SSW codes will have the capability to reach a majority of US citizens and help to reduce loss of life.

Please approve the new EAS codes to help keep Americans safe from severe weather events.