

Winter 2014-2015 Spotter Essential Guide

Reporting guidelines for winter weather spotters

| Weather Event | Reporting Criteria |
|---|--|
| Snow (see back page "How to Measure Snow" for details on measuring snow.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * When the first inch has fallen * Follow-up reports for each additional 2-inches * Storm total * 12-hour totals between 7 AM and 9 AM and between 7 PM and 9 PM whenever an inch or more has fallen |
| Rain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Amounts of one inch or greater within a 24-hour period |
| Ice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Freezing rain or sleet starts to fall * Ice causes serious impacts on travel * Ice causes damage (power lines and/or tree limbs for example) -Try to estimate the amount of glazing — e.g., 1/4 inch, 1/2 inch, etc. |
| High Wind | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Any wind gust 40 MPH or greater * Any damage caused by high winds |
| Dense Fog | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Visibility 1/4 mile or less * Fog which has an impact on travel |
| Flooding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Any flooding that covers roads or threatens property, whether from precipitation, ice jams, or coastal flooding * Any ice jam |
| Other Winter-Type Weather | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Anytime precipitation falls and it is not in the NWS forecast * Anytime fog (less than one mile) occurs and is not in the forecast * Anytime a different type of precipitation falls than what is forecast. For example, rain was forecast and snow and/or sleet occurs. |

5 Ways To Report

Toll-free telephone. Dial the Detroit/Pontiac NWS directly. The number is **800-808-0006**. This unlisted number is **only** to be used by spotters to submit a spotter report.

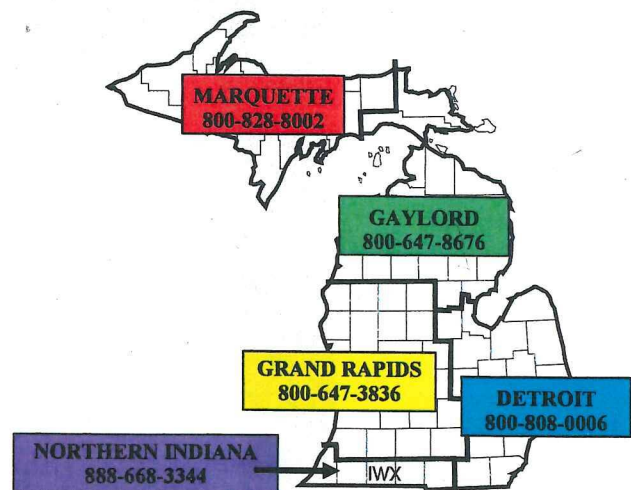
Facebook: www.facebook.com/NWSDetroit

Twitter: @NWSDetroit or <https://twitter.com/NWSDetroit>

Internet. <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/StormReport/SubmitReport.php?site=dtx> (The link is located on the left hand side of our homepage.)

Packet radio (K8DTX-5, 145.76 MHz). Spotter reports received via packet radio are printed out in the NWS office. These reports provide an accurate and permanent record of weather events.

Michigan NWS Office's Toll Free Numbers



Winter Weather Brochures download at www.weather.gov/os/brochures.shtml

Toll Free Spotter Hotline
1-800-808-0006

www.weather.gov/detroit



How to Measure Snow

1. Place a snowboard on the ground, preferably in an area not prone to blowing or drifting. A snowboard can be any 2 foot square board. Plywood works well. The board should be at least 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick.
2. If the snow melts as it falls, enter a trace for the event.
3. Measure the snow on the snowboard with a ruler. NOTE: snow is measured to the nearest tenth of an inch. For example, 3.25 inches would be reported as 3.3 inches.
4. Wipe the snow off the board and place it back on the ground. You are now ready to measure new snow.
5. If you do not have a snowboard, take several measurements where the snow is least affected by drifting. Do not measure on concrete or pavement. When measure on grass do not measure to the ground. Snow accumulates on top of the grass, leaving an inch or two of air below the accumulating snow. Compute an average of those measurements.

EXAMPLE OF HOW SNOW WOULD BE MEASURED DURING A WINTER STORM

Assume snow begins falling at 8 AM and comes to an end at 6 PM. NOTE: during a winter storm, do not wipe the board clean too often, as this may result in inflated snow totals. In fact, during a winter storm, it may be best to wait until the snow has come to an end before clearing the board as this allows adequate time for snow to settle.

1. Between 8 AM and 10 AM, you measure 1.3 inches and report that to the NWS.
2. Between 10 AM and 1 PM, you measure an additional 2.4 inches and report that to the NWS.
3. Between 1 PM and 6 PM, you measure an additional 3.6 inches and report that to the NWS.
4. When the snow ends at 6 PM you would report the amount of snow on the board, which is the storm total snow and would be 7.3 inches in this case.



NOTE: if by chance you did wipe the board clean during measurements, be sure to add up all of the earlier reported amounts to arrive at the storm total. (1.3 inches + 2.4 inches + 3.6 inches = 7.3 inches).

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/dtx/?n=snowmeasure>

