

Skywarn Storm Spotter Program

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Columbia, SC

Weather Forecast Office

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NWS Columbia SKYWARN



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What is SKYWARN?

In most years, thunderstorms, tornadoes and lightning cause hundreds of injuries and deaths and billions in property and crop damages. To obtain critical weather information, the National Weather Service (NWS) established SKYWARN® with partner organizations. SKYWARN® is a volunteer program with between 350,000 and 400,000 trained severe weather spotters. These volunteers help keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service. Although SKYWARN® spotters provide essential information for all types of weather hazards, the focus is reporting on severe local thunderstorms. In an average year, the United States experiences more than 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 5,000 floods and more than 1,000 tornadoes.

Since the program started in the 1970s, the information provided by SKYWARN® spotters, coupled with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite and other data, has enabled NWS to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods. SKYWARN® storm spotters form the nation's first line of defense against severe weather. There can be no finer reward than to know that your efforts have given your family and neighbors the precious gift of time--minutes that can help save lives.

Who is Eligible to Become a NWS Columbia Storm Spotter?

Any adult who lives in the [NWS Columbia service area](#) which includes 18 counties in central South Carolina and 5 counties in east central Georgia.

How to Become a NWS SKYWARN Storm Spotter

1) Attend one of our Basic Spotter training classes. There are no fees and no registration is required...just show up and enjoy the training.

The current schedule can be found by clicking this link: [SKYWARN Training Schedule](#)

2) If you cannot attend one of our in-person training sessions or want to refresh your knowledge, try the [Online Storm Spotter Course](#). You will need to register on the COMET website to access the training. Be sure to follow the instructions in the Course Description section for how to become an official Storm Spotter for the NWS in Columbia, SC.

Hosting a Storm Spotter Training Seminar

To request and host a Severe Weather Spotter Training seminar, fill out our [Outreach Request form](#).

Questions?

Contact Warning Coordination Meteorologist John Quagliarello.


E-mail: John.Quagliarello@noaa.gov

Phone: 803-822-8135, extension 223

Severe Weather Reports Needed




- Tornadoes, waterspouts, funnel clouds, rotating wall clouds
- Hail (any size)
- Estimated or measured wind speeds of 50 mph or greater
- Flooding resulting in closed or impassable roads, property damage
- Rainfall amounts greater than 1 inches per hour
- Trees downed by wind (including large limbs)
- Downed power lines or other structural damage caused by wind

Storm Reports for the National Weather Service





Time → Location → Condition → Source

- When did it occur?
- Where?
- What are you reporting?
- Who are you?

 Wind Damage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uprooted or downed trees• Large branches down• Wires down• Damaged infrastructure• Include photos if possible	 Tornadoes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visible rotation in a wall cloud• Funnel cloud• Tornado• Include photos if possible
 Hail <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hail of any size• Please measure with a ruler or common object for most accurate report• If possible, measure weight and include photos	 Flooding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any significant (uncommon) flooding• Water over roads• Streams rising to over bank full• Include photos if possible

National Weather Service – Columbia, SC

weather.gov/cae US National Weather Service Columbia, SC @NWS Columbia



When reporting any of these events, use the T E L method...what **TIME** did the event occur? What **EVENT** occurred? And what was the **LOCATION** of the event?

You can provide a storm report to our office directly using our online [Submit A Storm Report Form](#)

Download our [SKYWARN Spotter Report Form](#)

Download our [Spotter Quick Reference Sheet](#)