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Service Change Notice 24-47  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
230 PM EDT Thu May 2 2024

To:           Subscribers:  
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              Chief, Aviation and Space Weather Services Branch

Subject:      Moving Downtown Los Angeles Weather Observations Site to the  
              Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center on May 20, 2024

Effective Thursday, May 20, 2024 around 1500 Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) (8 AM PDT), the official Downtown Los Angeles weather observations site (KCQT) will be relocated to the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center on the south side of Dodger Stadium. Observations collected at KCQT support NWS forecast activities, the climate record for Downtown Los Angeles, certain aviation operations, and needs of the meteorology, hydrology, and climatology research communities.

Since 1999, the NWS has been collecting observations - temperature, precipitation, dew point, pressure and wind speed and direction - using an Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) located on the campus of the University of Southern California (USC). This location is only about 10 miles from the Pacific Ocean, which has had a significant influence on temperature, humidity, and precipitation measurements. The site location is suboptimal in characterizing Downtown Los Angeles's true weather and climate conditions. The core of Downtown Los Angeles is located farther inland from the coast and current site of KCQT. Gathering observations farther inland at the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center is expected to better represent the weather and climate of Downtown Los Angeles.

Downtown Los Angeles has one of the longest periods of record of weather observations in the West, dating back nearly 150 years to July 1877. The upcoming move to the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center returns the Downtown Los Angeles observing site to a location near the previous Los Angeles Civic Center station, which was active from 1964 to 1999. The site relocation will help build on the climate records that are more representative of Downtown Los Angeles.

Moreover, the move will provide better sampling of weather conditions conducive for the spread of brush fires closer to the foothills, and thus better assist NWS meteorologists in forecasting fire-weather conditions.

The observing equipment will also change from an ASOS to different equipment that is also used for the Cooperative Observer Program (COOP). This change is necessary to align with infrastructure at Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center. The change in equipment type is not expected to significantly change measurements of meteorological or climatological variables.

With the change of equipment from ASOS to COOP, there will no longer be a WMO Heading or AWIPS ID for real-time Downtown Los Angeles weather observations. Data collected from the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center will still be available online via the NWS Weather and Hazards Data Viewer (<https://www.wrh.noaa.gov/map/?wfo=lox>) under the new equipment identification 'FHMCI'. The data from the new site will also be provided in the Hourly Weather Roundup under 'L.A. DOWNTOWN' (<https://www.weather.gov/wrh/TextProduct?product=loxrwrca>) without the sky condition and visibility provided. Aside from real-time weather observations, WMO Headings and AWIPS IDs will switch from using 'CQT' to 'FHM' around or shortly after the completion of the observing site relocation. This applies to the daily Climate Report (CLICQT changing to CLIFHM), the Preliminary Local Climatological Data WS Form F-6 (CF6CQT changing to CF6FHM), and the monthly Climate Report (CLMCQT changing to CLMFHM).

The National Weather Service thanks our partners at the Los Angeles City Fire Department for their collaboration and support of relocating the observation site. We also thank the USC for housing our weather observation site for the past 25 years. Observations gathered at USC have greatly contributed to the National Weather Service's understanding of weather conditions to complete its mission of protecting life and property.

The NWS will hold a news conference at the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center to commemorate the Downtown Los Angeles observing site relocation and to discuss factors that lead to the move.

For questions regarding the relocation of the official Downtown Los Angeles weather observation site or the news conference, please contact:

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Resource:

Downtown Los Angeles can experience large swings in meteorological observations, even across small distances. In 2000, David Bruno, Lead Meteorologist at NWS Los Angeles/Oxnard, published, "Climate of Los Angeles, California," to identify and document this phenomenon. Data from this study was factored into the decision to relocate the site. You may access the publication using this link:

[https://www.weather.gov/media/wrh/online\\_publications/TMs/TM-261.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/wrh/online_publications/TMs/TM-261.pdf).

National Service Change Notices are online at:

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