

CITIZEN WEATHER OBSERVER PROGRAM

F A Q

WEATHER-DISPLAY-LITE* (printing hard copy suggested)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I have difficulty moving the switches to the green position. Is this necessary?

A: To transmit observations the switches must show green. Try clicking on the end of the switch graphic. The switch should cycle between on and off.

Q: How often should I transmit observations?

A: NOAA weather prediction models require very large volumes of "real-time" observations. As a volunteer the frequency of your observations is entirely your decision. Your data is valuable no matter how often you send it. Any data period 5 minutes or longer is fine.

Q: I don't find my brand of weather station on the SELECT WEATHER STATION menu.

A: The growing numbers of home weather station manufacturers make it difficult for our volunteer software authors to keep the program totally current. Please let us know the brand and model you would like added.

Q: Can my observations be of value to volunteers at the National Hurricane Center.

A: Definitely. During Tropical Storm Barry the highest measured wind speed was reported by a CWOP volunteer.

Q: I have a Macintosh computer. Can I use the CWOP free software?

A: Only in the "Windows Emulation Mode"

Q: I have a Skywarn spotter number. Do I need a CW number?"

A: In the CWOP program NOAA requires use of either a CW number or amateur radio call sign to identify data.

Q: I have trouble entering my CW number

A: In the CW number only the C and W are letters. The balance of your identification is made up of four numbers.

Q: I am an amateur radio operator. Is it necessary to obtain a CW number?

A: No. The software will recognize your call sign as identification.

Q: I want to send my observations to NOAA but would like to develop my own software.

A: A number of individuals have developed their own software. Observations are sent to NOAA using the Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) format. Additional information on this system can be found at www.tapr.org

Q: I have difficulty getting my latitude and longitude correct.

A: The best means of finding your latitude and longitude is to use the Eagle software. <http://www.geocode.com/eagle.html-ssi>. The new conversion feature in Weather Display Lite is simple to use. To prevent errors copy and paste your latitude and longitude from Eagle to Weather Display Lite.

Q: Does the weather display program need to be running (minimized) to send observations?

A: Yes, the program will not transmit data at the designated times if it is not running.

Q: I have a Davis Vantage Pro will your software support this new weather station.

A: Weather Display Lite, v8.16 has been designed to work with the Vantage Pro.

Q: I have moved and would like to change my latitude and longitude. The software rejects my new location.

A: We hope to correct this problem in future versions of the software. At this time the only way to change your latitude and longitude is to re-register and receive a new CW number.

Q: Is it necessary to uninstall an old version of the software before downloading updates.

A: No, the new version will overwrite the old software.

Q: What if I am contacted by a ham radio operator and told that I should not be using a ham radio Internet server like aprs.net or findu.com?

A: Some ham radio operators have the erroneous idea that the Internet is like the radio spectrum with "bands" specifically for ham operation.

This is simply not true. The Internet is open to all. While the owners and operators of servers can choose to bar access to some users, our Citizens Weather activity is fully supported by the owners and operators of the APRS servers that we use.

Q: How important is it that my anemometer be at the National Weather Service recommended height of 10 meters?

A: If it is easy, convenient and safe for you to locate your anemometer at this height, that's fine. However, safety is much more important than the height of your anemometer. Don't locate any of your instruments in an unsafe location.

Q: If my station has been inactive for a period of time, do I have to reregister to submit data?

A: No, as long as you have not moved to a different location, just restart.

Q:What if I move, do I have to reregister?

A: No, just contact us and tell us your CW number or amateur radio call sign, your new latitude, longitude, elevation and nearby town.

Then restart your station.

Q: What if I change Internet service providers, do I have to reregister?

A: No, just tell us your new e-mail address.

Q: I have a new e-mail address. How do change the software.

A: Select SETUP, Select SETUP FTP/... , Use CONNECTIONS tab, Click on GET ISP'S, Highlight current ISP, Click OK. This will work if you have a new ISP or just change your e-mail address.

Q: How is my data used?

A: Observations from the CWOP program are available only to NOAA offices and laboratories. A favorite winter precipitation forecast model is: <http://www.hpc.ncep.noaa.gov/roz/SOOSAC/>

Q: How do I set my barometer? How often should I check it?

A: Wait for a stable period of weather, often indicated by little or no wind. Adjust your barometer to match a local TV or radio station. Check the readings every week or two to make certain calibration remains correct.

