



FIRST NATIONAL WEATHER ASSOCIATION DIGITAL SEALS TO MARK AN EVOLUTION IN WEATHER INFORMATION DELIVERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 19, 2014

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SALT LAKE CITY, UT- A new certification was introduced at the National Weather Association (NWA) 39th Annual Meeting today. The Digital Seal of Approval will be an option for providers of Internet weather content who exhibit a sound understanding of meteorology.

“With the inundation of weather webcasts and blogs on the Internet, the public has little way to determine if their forecasts and other meteorological details are from a knowledgeable source,” said NWA President Jeff Craven. “This new Digital Seal of Approval adds credence to our field – and will help the public identify reliable weather sources.”

The NWA will start accepting applications from weather webcasters and bloggers who want to be considered for the Digital Seal of Approval on November 5. Hundreds of individuals in the United States and Canada provide weather information every day via the Internet. This Seal will help the public identify who passed rigorous standards set by a professional organization.

The Digital Seal program was conceived by the NWA Broadcast Meteorology Committee (BMC) in 2009. A special study was commissioned in early 2013 to determine the need for such an endeavor and to establish, for the public interest, a way to gauge Internet weather information sites. After many years of refining, the NWA Digital Seal is now ready to launch.

“This will separate the professionals from the amateurs, and help the public know which weather bloggers or webcasters have exhibited a solid understanding of meteorology,” said Miles Muzio, BMC Chair.

This Seal is distinguishable from the NWA Television/Radio Seal of Approval, which has served as recognition of excellence among weather broadcasters since the early 1980s.

To be designated a Digital Seal Holder, candidates must pass a 100-question written exam testing their knowledge of weather topics such as satellite, radar, climatology, synoptic meteorology and severe storms. They must then submit examples of their online work to a five-

member evaluation panel, which will appraise each applicant's ability in six categories: Communication Skills, Use of Graphics, Meteorological Competency, Flow of Presentation, Use of Terminology, and Feature (an educational or editorial piece). Passage of both are required in order to be awarded the Digital Seal.

The Digital Seal must be re-certified every three years through attendance at various conferences or workshops, and through continuing education. Holders of this certification must be members of the NWA in good standing and fulfill certain full-time or part-time posting thresholds.

The new program is managed by Bill Murray, a partner with the Weather Factory who writes extensively on the Alabama Weather Blog and is a weekly host on the podcast "Weather Brains." Bill was awarded the very first NWA Digital Seal.

All Digital Seal holders may prominently display their certification on webcasts and electronic weather blogs. The Seal is an indication of excellence as determined by the NWA.

The NWA is a member-led, all inclusive, non-profit, professional association with a mission of "Connecting operational meteorologists in pursuit of excellence in weather forecasting, communication and service." Members join together to share information and studies to improve weather forecasting, and provide education and training initiatives to students, users of weather information, and the general public.

*For additional information on the National Weather Association, please go to www.nwas.org
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