

NOUS41 KWBC 191505  
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 25-97  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
1005 AM EST Fri Dec 19 2025

To:       Subscribers:  
          -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
          -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network  
          -NOAAPORT  
          Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From:     Mary Mullusky, Chief  
          Operations Services Division

Subject: Changes to Public, Fire, and Marine Forecast Zones for WFO  
Wakefield, VA, effective March 3, 2026

Effective on Tue, March 3, 2026, at 4:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST),  
2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), Marine Zone ANZ638, served by NWS  
WFO Wakefield, VA, will be expanded slightly to include adjacent portions  
of Chuckatuck Creek, as well as the Elizabeth and Nansemond Rivers.

If March 3, 2026 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation  
will be postponed to March 4, 2026 at 2100 UTC

These areas in the marine zone expansion will mostly be carved from the  
land-based zones of the adjacent VA cities of Norfolk, Suffolk, and  
Chesapeake, as well as Isle of Wight County, VA. A line east-northeast  
of US Highway 17 will be used for the newly expanded marine zone in Isle  
of Wight County and the city of Chesapeake, along the Chuckatuck Creek  
and Nansemond River, respectively. Highway 17 will also serve as the far  
southwestern boundary of the newly expanded marine zone along the western  
branch of the Elizabeth River. The Downtown Tunnel and the Berkley  
Bridge serve as the far south and southeastern bounds of the newly  
expanded marine zone on the eastern branch side. The zone ANZ638 will  
change to AMZ639 and be renamed to "James River from JRB to the Hampton  
Roads Bridge Tunnel including the Elizabeth River".

These changes have been made in coordination with the United States Coast  
Guard, the Virginia Maritime Association, the Port of Virginia, and other  
partners and stakeholders. The modification of the lower James River  
marine zone will enhance safety and improve marine forecast and warning  
services provided to the marine community in southeastern Virginia.

The cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, divided by the Elizabeth River,  
will be split into two separate zones. Currently Norfolk and Portsmouth  
are combined into zone number VA095. These cities will be split to  
Norfolk zone VA530 and Portsmouth zone VA531. Dividing these into 2  
separate zones will allow for more precise watches, warnings and  
advisories for the 2 cities.

The majority of public impacts will be observed by mariners and those in Norfolk and Portsmouth, who will now receive more focused watches, warnings, and advisories in these areas. Special Marine Warnings will also be issued for threats to boaters, instead of land-based warnings that often have higher thresholds of intensity (such as a Severe Thunderstorm Warning) or lack relevance to marine areas (such as a Flash Flood Warning). The USCG also broadcasts special Marine Warnings across the marine band radio. This change primarily changes the marine area of responsibility and the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth.

Table 1: UGC-Z: Current Marine Zone Number and Name of Impacted Zone

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 ANZ638: James River from James River Bridge to the Hampton Roads  
 Bridge Tunnel

Table 2: UGC-Z: New Marine Zone Number and Name of Impacted Zone

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 ANZ639: James River from JRB to HRBT, including the Elizabeth  
 River

Table 3. UGC-Z: Current Public Zone Numbers of Impacted Zones

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 VAZ093: Isle of Wight  
 VAZ096: Suffolk  
 VAZ095: Norfolk / Portsmouth

Table 4: UGC-Z: New Public Zone Numbers of Impacted Zones

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 VAZ528: Isle of Wight  
 VAZ529: Suffolk  
 VAZ530: Norfolk  
 VAZ531: Portsmouth

Table 3: NWS Products Affected by these Zone Changes

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Coastal Waters Forecast	FZUS51 KAKQ	CWFAKQ
Marine Weather Message	WHUS51 KAKQ	SMWAKQ
Marine Weather Statement	FZUS71 KAKQ	MWSAKQ
Marine Weather Message	WHUS71 KAKQ	MWWAKQ
Surf Zone Forecast	FZUS51 KAKQ	SRFKQ
Area Forecast Discussion	FXUS61 KAKQ	AFDAKQ
Area Forecast Matrices	FOUS51 KAKQ	AFMAKQ
Point Forecast Matrices	FOUS51 KAKQ	PFMAKQ
Zone Forecast Product	FPUS51 KAKQ	ZFPAKQ
Public Information Statement	NOUS41 KAKQ	PNSAKQ
Flood Watch/Warning	WGUS61 KAKQ	FFAAKQ
Winter Storm Watch/Warning	WWUS41 KAKQ	WSWAKQ
Special Weather Statement	WWUS81 KAKQ	SPSAKQ
Hazardous Weather Outlook	FLUS41 KAKQ	HWOAKQ
Air Quality Alerts	AEUS71 KAKQ	AQAQKQ
Air Quality Index Forecast	AEUS71 KAKQ	AQIAKQ
Tabular State Forecast	FPUS61 KAKQ	SFTAQKQ

Fire Weather Message	WWUS81 KAKQ	RFWAKQ
Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/ Advisory	WWUS71 KAKQ	NPWAKQ
Watch County Notification	WWUS61 KAKQ	WCNAKQ

NWS partners and users should take the appropriate action to ensure systems recognize the new zone alignments and adjusted name of ANZ638.

Preliminary shapefiles for marine and public weather forecast zones are available online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/MarineZones>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/PublicZones>

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 13, 2026.

For a graphical depiction of these changes please refer to the link below:  
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a111698fda93417f997a49769398a773>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:  
<https://www.weather.gov/notification/>

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