

NOUS41 KWBC 262205 AAA
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 25-97 Updated
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
505 PM EST Thu Feb 26 2026

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: Updated: Changes to Public, Fire, and Marine Forecast Zones for
WFO Wakefield, VA, effective April 16, 2026

Updated to change the implementation date from March 3, 2026 to April 16,
2026 and final versions of the shapefiles will be available on March 24,
2026.

Effective on Thu, April 16, 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 April 16, 2026 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation
will be postponed to April 20, 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

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

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

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

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

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

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 |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| ----- | ----- | ----- |
| 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 | SRFAKQ |
| 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 | AQAAKQ |
| Air Quality Index Forecast | AEUS71 KAKQ | AQIAKQ |
| Tabular State Forecast | FPUS61 KAKQ | SFTAKQ |
| 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 March 24, 2026.

For a graphical depiction of these changes please refer to the link below:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a111698fda93417f997a49769398a773>

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

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