

Messages of the Day
October 2015

Thursday, October 1, 2015

Happy New Year 2016 . . . Water New Year that is!

Wait! It's not January 1st, is it? No, it's October 1st and a special day on the CoCoRaHS calendar. It is the first day of the 2016 Water Year!

What is the "water year" you ask?

The water year is the best consecutive twelve months that span the "water storage/water usage" hydrologic cycle. The water year cycle is particularly obvious in the Rocky Mountains and western U.S. where snow begins to accumulate at high elevations in October and doesn't melt and run off until next spring and summer. But this same important annual cycle takes different forms across the entire country.

Another way to think of the Water Year is the resting/replenishing season followed by the water consuming season where vegetation grows, crops are cultivated and then harvested. For much of the country, the months of October through March are months where precipitation from the sky exceeds evaporation from the ground. This means that soil moisture and ground water can recharge. When next spring arrives, temperatures will warm again, plants will come back from dormancy and once again evapotranspiration will surge.

CoCoRaHS Water Year Summaries

As we celebrate the new year, we will generate Water Year Summary reports for every CoCoRaHS station. A first draft of these summaries will be provided in early October to give all observers the chance to review their observations for the year and make any corrections if necessary. (We'll send out A message when they are ready.) Then in a few weeks once everyone has had a chance to review their observations **and fill in missing data, we will then regenerate the reports.**

To look at previous year's Water Year Summary Reports please click here: [PAST WATER YEAR SUMMARY REPORTS](#) .

Thanks again for helping CoCoRaHS track precipitation across the country. Happy New Year!

Sunday, October 4, 2015

The Degree Symbol -- How do I type it?

One of our observers writes: "I notice in the comments of many CoCoRaHS members, they are able to enter temperatures using a circle degree symbol. I cannot find that symbol on my keyboard, so I assume they are accomplishing this by some combination on keys. Can you tell me how to do this?"

Great question! The way to enter the degree symbol is:

On Windows: Hold down the ALT key and type 0176 on the numeric keypad on the right side of your keyboard

On Mac OS: Hold down the Option key and press zero.

Thursday, October 8, 2015

How is CoCoRaHS correctly pronounced? KO-ko-rozz

We get this question a lot, since this is not your ordinary run of the mill acronym. It stands for the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network, which started out as the Colorado Rain and Hail Study back in 1998.

The correct pronunciation is: "CoCo" . . . that's easy, like in coconut. The second part "RaHS" is just about like it looks. When the doctor checks your tonsils he says "say ah!" and that's the same sound only with an "R" and an "S" on it. Like he's saying "say rahs!" Put the two together and there you have it . . . pronounced KO-ko-rozz

Sunday, October 11, 2015

Incredible rains? . . . Don't let your gauge overflow!

Our CoCoRaHS gauges hold a lot of water. The inner tube holds 1.00" and the outer cylinder holds 10" more for a total of about 11.30". That's more than most of us can imagine. Yet, a few times each year, local areas of the U.S. receive exceptional rainfall exceeding 11 inches in 24 hours. This just happened on back-to-back days last week in South Carolina and on at least 7 other days this year in other places.

Some of us have been caught off guard by intense rainfalls. If you find yourself receiving incredible rainfall that looks like it is filling up your gauge quickly (both the inner tube plus the outer cylinder) and more rain is likely, please (if safe conditions warrant) try to empty the gauge at least once during the day and/or before you go to bed. Be sure to write down that amount and then add it to the total you measure the next morning.

Thursday, October 15, 2015

A Second Outer Cylinder for Winter Weather? Great Idea!

One of our volunteer observers states that "Even though we don't get a lot of snow in Western North Carolina we do have a lot of occasions at my elevation that we wake up to frozen precipitation in our outer gauge. Rather than making several, sometimes dangerous, trips back and from the gauge site I have purchased a second outer sleeve and just swap them out at the morning reading. I can then leave the frozen precipitation to melt on its own in the warmth of the house or help it along with artificial means. Much, much easier on my old bones."

That is an excellent idea. Many of us have a extra one for just that purpose. The outer cylinder can be purchased at a cheaper price than the whole gauge for around \$13.50 and is available from those distributors listed on our web site.

Sunday, October 18, 2015

Observation Notes . . . Daily Comments - CoCoRaHS comments extremely useful in supplementing your data!

One of the great things about the CoCoRaHS web site is that you can include comments about your daily observation when you enter your daily precipitation report each morning under observation notes. These comments are extremely useful in supplementing your data and greatly help others get a more detailed picture of what has taken place during the past 24 hours.

Here are some examples:

From California, October 2015: *"What a strange day, rain in the early morning hours to give way to a sunny, very warm day with a high of 88 degrees. Thunderstorms around 6pm and started raining around 11pm.!"*

From New Jersey, June 2015: *"Severe T'storm rolled in with very gusty winds, heavy rain, & vivid lightning. Multiple trees down with power lines & large area of power outages for days, also lost cell phones & cable."*

From Indiana, Nov 18, 2013: *"Tornado warnings, heard siren from Claypool, and thunderstorms Sunday afternoon. We had a few dead branches down. No damage."*

From New Hampshire, May 2013: *"stupendous thunderstorm last night - window-rattling blasts all night long. Still drizzling."*

From South Carolina, Oct 2015: *"This is the most ever in my gauge since I've been doing this. All around the house is water, haven't seen that much in 22 yrs.."*

From Oklahoma, November 2011: *"Felt the 5.6 earthquake here in Edmond around 10:45 PM. Rattled windows and vibrated the floor. Second time in less than 24 hours. A weird sensation I'm not use to."*

Finally, Florida, July 2013: *"Between 1545 - 1626 had 2.64 inches. A lot of thunder and lightning. This was probably one of the heaviest rainfalls in such a short time in the 29 years I've lived here."*

You can view a summary of each days reports by clicking on "View Data" from the homepage's top menu bar and then choose "Daily Comments Reports" for a given location and date. Please give this a try with your next observation.

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Check out CoCoRaHS on Facebook and Twitter!

Did you know that CoCoRaHS is on *Facebook* and *Twitter*! We hope you will check us out on these networks and perhaps become 'fan' of CoCoRaHS on Facebook or a 'follower' on Twitter. You can click on the icons at the top of the CoCoRaHS homepage or below to join in today!

For CoCoRaHS on Facebook, click here: [CoCoRaHS Facebook](#)

For CoCoRaHS on Twitter, click here: [CoCoRaHS Twitter](#)

Sunday, October 18, 2015

The CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar! November 2015: All You Ever Wanted To Know About Lake-effect Snow

Lake-effect snow will be the subject of our next "[WxTalk Webinar](#)" on Thursday, November 12th. Join us as *All You Ever Wanted To Know About Lake-effect Snow* is presented by Thomas Niziol of the Weather Channel.

Space is limited to the first 500 registrants, so register today! We will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line the following day.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #42 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: All You Ever Wanted To Know About Lake-effect Snow

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2015

Time: 11:00 AM Eastern, 10:00AM Central, 9:00 AM Mountain, 8:00 AM Pacific

This presentation will address the basics behind the development of lake-effect snow, where in the world lake-effect snow occurs and how the forecasting of these mesoscale storms have changed throughout the years. We cannot talk snow without discussing some of the most amazing lake-effect snow storms that have occurred in the past few decades, so we will have some fun with that as well. Finally I will address some of the recent research efforts that have taken place and how that information is opening the door to a better understanding of these amazing winter events.

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [LAKE-EFFECT](#)

Be sure to attend our other upcoming CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinars this fall:

- Thursday, December 3, 2015 - 1PM EST: "**SPECIAL WEBINAR - A Review of Significant Weather Events Occurring in 2015**", Greg Carbin, NOAA/Storm Prediction Center
- Thursday, December 10, 2015 - 1PM EST: "**Radiosondes, it's what's overhead that counts:**", Paul Ciesielski, Colorado State University

Friday, October 30, 2015

Water year summary report!!!

"Water Year Summary Reports and graphs" are now available for every CoCoRaHS rain gauge observer who submitted measurements during the 2015 water year (October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015).

This is your personal "2015 Water Year Journal". Please take a look.

To view the summary for your station, click on "My Account" at the top of the ["CoCoRaHS homepage"](#). You'll need to be logged in for this to work. You will find all your data reports compiled into monthly and annual totals. Graphs of daily and monthly totals and accumulations are provided. "Comments" from each daily report are also tabulated.

If you find any missing data or incorrect reports for your station, please take this opportunity to fill in or correct them. Changes in your "summary report" will not show up immediately, but will be recompiled and updated in early November when all changes have been compiled.

To correct missing reports, you can do so in the My Data area by clicking the links under the List/Edit My Reports section of the menu on the left side. You can enter missing reports the same way you enter your daily reports, just change the date on the report form.

Water Year summary reports and graphs are also available for 2010 - 2014. With help from the PRISM Climate Group at Oregon State University we also provide monthly estimates for your "normal" (30-year 1981-2010 average) precipitation. We can all see if our monthly and water year totals were wetter or drier than average.

To view data for any CoCoRaHS station in the USA, Canada, Puerto Rico or U.S. Virgin Islands, click here: [WATER YEAR SUMMARY](#).

Enjoy, and thanks for participating.