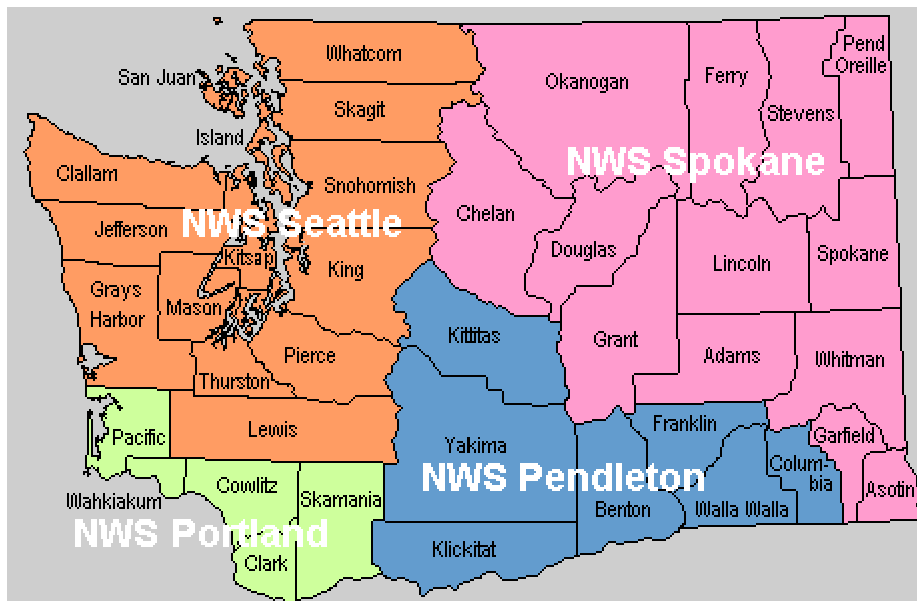


What is a Watch and a Warning?

The [National Weather Service \(NWS\)](http://www.nws.gov) is the "official" Federal government voice for issuing life threatening flood or weather warnings to the public. You can reach their Websites at:

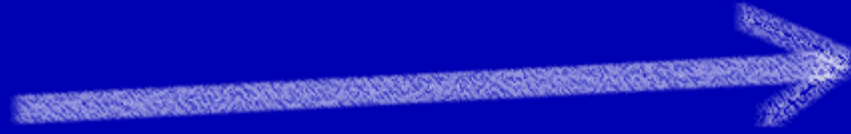
- **NWS Seattle** (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/seattle>) serves northwest Washington from Lewis and Grays Harbor counties northward.
- **NWS Portland** (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/portland>) serves the counties along the Columbia river in southwest Washington.
- **NWS Spokane** (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/spokane>) serves northeast Washington from Chelan to Garfield and Asotin counties.
- **NWS Pendleton** (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pendleton>) serves south central Washington from Kittitas to Columbia counties.



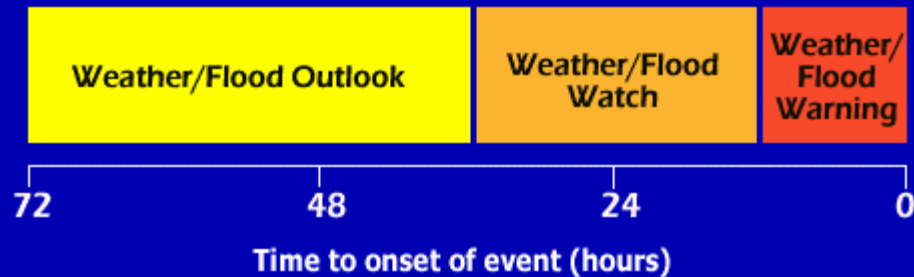
The **NWS** issues flood and weather **watches**, **warnings**, and **advisories** in the effort to help protect lives and property.

- **Watch** - The risk of hazardous flood or weather conditions have increased, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is uncertain. It is usually issued 12- to 36-hours prior to the potential event. A *Watch* is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to do so, can set emergency plans in motion.
- **Warning** - When hazardous flood or weather conditions are occurring, are imminent, or have a very high probability of occurrence. A *Warning* is typically issued within 12-hours of a life or property-threatening event.
- **Advisory** - Less serious conditions that can cause significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.

National Weather Service Outlook/Watch/Warning Terminology



Increasing confidence that event will occur...



OUTLOOK

Issued as initial notice of a potential hazardous weather or flooding event. The *outlook* raises public awareness of the possibility of a severe weather or flooding event. Plans may be made to prepare for the event, should the *outlook* be upgraded to a *watch*. An *outlook* is issued 72-36 hours before the occurrence of the event.

WATCH

Issued when the probability of a hazardous weather or flooding event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, or timing is still uncertain. The public can set their plans in motion to prepare for the event. A *watch* is issued from 36 to 12 hours before the occurrence of the event.

WARNING

Issued when a hazardous weather or flooding event is occurring, is imminent, or has a high probability of occurrence within 12 hours. A *warning* is used for conditions posing a threat to life and/or property. The National Weather Service is the single official voice that issues *warnings* for life-threatening hazards.