

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

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NMAC Correspondence M2026-10

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To: Geographic Area Coordinating Groups

From: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

Subject: National Weather Service Particularly Dangerous Situation Usage in Red Flag Warnings

Purpose: To ensure consistent understanding of enhanced Red Flag Warning messaging by National Weather Service (NWS) offices and the gravity of a Particularly Dangerous Situation across wildland fire operations. This information will be distributed to units, dispatch centers, duty officers, incident commanders, and field personnel to promote firefighter situational awareness during certain extreme fire weather events.

Background: In 2021, NWS made changes to Red Flag Warnings that allowed offices to highlight extreme fire environment conditions with enhanced wording when applicable. Wording for a Particularly Dangerous Situation (also known as a PDS) is found in the headline and first bullet in the body of the Red Flag Warning product.

A Particularly Dangerous Situation is a rare, locally defined fire environment where Red Flag Warning criteria are greatly exceeded and/or near record levels. NWS forecast offices will specify the nature of the exceptional hazard in the headline and the body of the Red Flag Warning message when used. By nature, Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warnings are used infrequently as they highlight rare events, and it may be several years between issuances of a Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warning at any given location.

Note that graphically a Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warning will display the same as all Red Flag Warnings on NWS web pages and the words Particularly Dangerous Situation will only be seen in the headline and body of the Red Flag Warning text product.

Key Points for Distribution:

- Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warnings represent rare, exceptionally dangerous conditions that greatly exceed normal Red Flag criteria.
- The primary purpose is heightened awareness for firefighter safety.
- Personnel should treat a Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warning as a trigger for elevated vigilance, potential prepositioning of resources, and heightened safety protocols.

Questions regarding Particularly Dangerous Situation Red Flag Warnings should be directed to the issuing NWS office or your Geographic Area Predictive Services unit.

/s/ Charles Russell
Chair, National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

Cc: Geographic Area Coordination Center Managers and Deputies

