



# Nassau County Skywarn Snowfall Reporting

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**Repeater Information**  
Primary 146.805(-)  
Secondary 147.135(+)  
136.5 PL for both

Skywarn nets are convened when requested by the NWS Office at Upton or at the discretion of the Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator. Snowfall reporting is not considered high priority traffic and if no net is in progress, please submit your reports directory to Upton via email using the address on your Spotter ID card. Be sure to include your name, callsign, spotter id, time and location when submitting your report!

- When snow accumulates 1 inch (especially when none is forecast)
- When snow accumulates 3 inches (the NWS issues an advisory for 4 inches)
- When snow accumulates 5 inches (the NWS issues a warning for 6 inches)
- When snow accumulates 1 inch in 1 hour
- Storm Total Snowfall

Adapted from *Snow Measurement Guidelines for National Weather Service Snow Spotters* from the National Weather Service Forecast Office, Wakefield, Virginia



## Before the First Snow

First choose a convenient spot away from the obstacles such as a house, garage, shed, fence, large bushes, and trees. Generally it should be about 10-12 feet from a 6 foot fence. These objects aid in the piling up (drifting) of the snow near them. The ideal spot will usually be in the middle of your back or front yard away from trees and not in an area frequently disturbed by pets. The oval denotes the best place to measure snow. When measuring take several readings within the oval



## Measure Snow Using a Snowboard

The goal is to achieve the most representative and accurate measurement of snow accumulation, which is widely known to be obtained using a snowboard.

A snowboard should be any lightly colored board that is about 2 feet by 2 feet. A piece of plywood painted white works very well. Ideally, it should be painted white to minimize heating by sunlight. Place your snowboard in the spot you have chosen. Mark the location of the snowboard with a stake so you can find it after a fresh snowfall.

## Measuring Snowfall

**Snowfall is measured to the nearest tenth of an inch.** Measure the greatest amount of snowfall that has accumulated on your snowboard since the last observation. You can measure on a wooden deck or ground if a snowboard is not available. **Snowfall should not be measured more than 6 times in 24 hours.** You can measure the hourly snowfall rate, but do not clean off your board each hour. Only clean off the board when you take one of the six daily measurements. Once the snow ends, add up the measurements from each time the snowboard was cleaned to reach a storm total.

Special cases:

- Snow falls and accumulates on the snowboard, but then melts. In this case, the snowfall is the greatest depth of snow observed on the board before it begins to melt. If this occurs several times, measure the snowfall after each snow shower and add each measurement for the total snowfall.
- Snow falls and melts continuously on the board. In this case, if the snow never reaches a depth of a tenth of an inch, then a trace of snowfall is recorded.
- Snow has blown or drifted onto the snowboard. In this case, take several measurements from around the yard where the snow has not drifted, being careful only to measure new snow. Take an average of the various measurements to arrive at a total.
- Sleet counts towards total snowfall, freezing rain accumulation does not.

## Measuring Snow Depth

The depth of snow on the ground includes both new snow and old snow which was in place. Measure the total snow depth at several locations in your yard which have not drifted or blown. Take an average of these



measurements to arrive at the snow depth. Sometimes old snow can be very hard and crusty underneath the new snow. Be sure that the ruler gets all the way down to the underlying ground.

**Snow depth and newly fallen snow is measured to the nearest inch.**

## Relaying Real Time Information

Real time reports are just as important to the NWS as snowfall measurements. Here are a few examples of information that would be beneficial to forecast and warning operations.

- Change in precipitation type (rain to snow, snow to freezing rain, etc)
- Snow Accumulation of 1 inch or more
- Heavy Snowfall Rate (example: snowing at 1 inch per hour)
- Significant Blowing or Drifting snow
- Is the snow, ice, or blowing snow having a major impact on travel
- What is occurring is not what is in the forecast
- Property damage
- Power outages
- Flooding