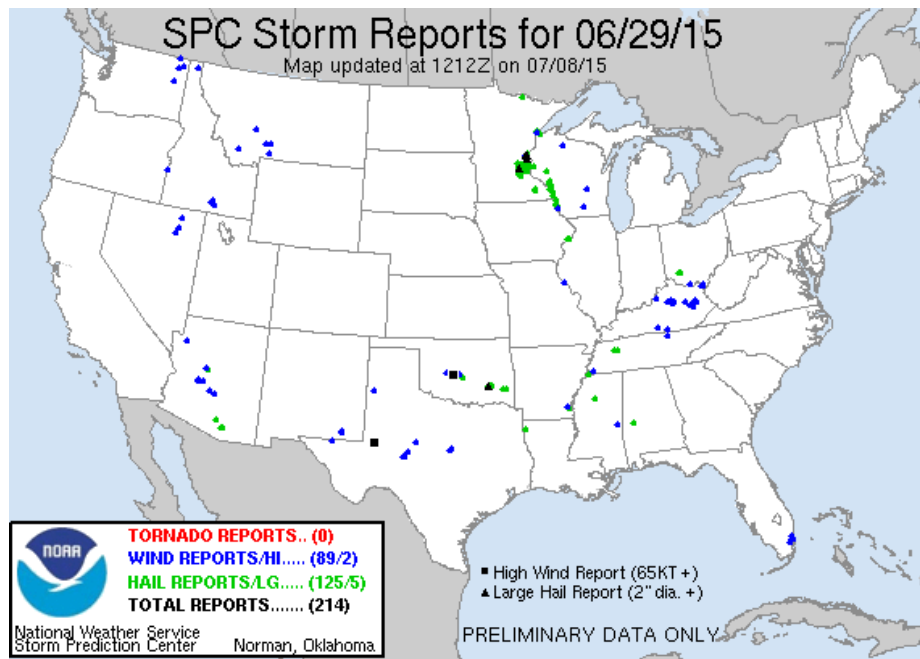# *Severe Weather Reporting*

The National Weather Service (NWS) keeps a very detailed archive of major weather events and reports that occurred all over the United States. This archive is used in courts of law, research, and in real-time. Meteorologists use weather reports in real-time to issue warnings and to update their forecasts. Severe weather reports are just one of many pieces of data that meteorologists at local weather forecast offices and the Storm Prediction Center (the office assigned with issuing severe weather watches and outlooks) use to make forecasts.

Severe weather reports are public record. You can go to Storm Prediction Center's website at http://www.wpc.noaa.gov click on "Storm Reports" and pull up a map similar to this one from June 21, 2015. You can see the location for every severe and significant severe weather report across the continental United States.

In this example, there were 214 severe weather reports on this day. The most significant regions on this map include some wind reports across Kentucky and a ton of hail reports in the Twin Cities area and western Wisconsin.

While the number one priority when in a severe or hazardous weather situation is safety. The NWS appreciates receiving safely obtained storm reports from trained spotters and members of the public alike. As part of the StormReady Supporter program, the NWS requires that supporters have at least one method of reporting severe weather to the NWS.

On the next page is a chart of common methods to report severe weather. Think about these five methods and consider the good and bad things about each method. Consider the following questions:

➢ What types of weather situations do you report weather or hazards?
➢ Which methods are most effective?
➢ Which methods make logical sense to use in different types of situations?
➢ How severe is the overall event? (e.g. a singular report of a down tree is less severe than a EF-4 tornado on the ground)
➢ How effective will your report be? (e.g. calls to 9-1-1 may take longer to get to the NWS than e-spotter).

NWS E-spotter: This is an online method for weather-alert individuals to report severe weather directly to the local NWS office. You can access this website at http://forecast.weather.gov/hazards/mpx. You will have to click "E-Spotter" to access the method. You must have your computer/mobile device location on. The person using this method must be from a local Emergency Manager or a trained spotter. You can learn more at http://www.skywarnonline.com/sneakpeak/espotter.htm.

The blank lines are for you to think of any other methods to report severe weather than you can think of a method not already mentioned.

After you complete the chart, discuss with the class about which method(s) your school should use to report severe weather to the National Weather Service.

Method	Good Things about Method	Bad Things About Method
Direct Phone Call to NWS		
9-1-1		
E-mail		
NWS E-Spotter		
Emergency Management Agency		
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)		