

Wind Farms

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developing a “climatology” of the clutter (how often, under what conditions, products affected, etc.) We are interested in collecting significant impact cases (missed or delayed weather warnings) from around the country to better understand the interaction between wind turbines and the WSR-88D, and if warranted, make a case for action by policymakers. A clearer picture of the impacts may also help the development of a formal policy for working with the wind energy industry and avoid over-reacting or under-reacting to this issue.

THE FUTURE

Wind power will continue to rapidly expand in the U.S. due to its appeal as a clean, alternative energy source. As a result, the number of wind farms installed in the line of sight of WSR-88Ds and in “close” proximity will also increase. Presently, there is not much we can do about developments close to radars because the federal government has no regulatory authority over wind farm developments on private land. Some WFOs (and military bases) will be affected more than others and perhaps feel like they are being surrounded by wind farms. However, it is imperative that we keep this issue in perspective — it’s a clutter issue and largely confined to the lowest radar elevation tilt(s). Yes, the wind farms may impact the radar data and products, but the key is whether or not they affect weather warning operations. WFOs must be ready to document these operational impacts, if we are to successfully make a case for action. In the mean time, WFOs will need to include wind farm signatures and possible impacts on data and products in their forecast and warning process and work around the issue as best they can. However, we must ensure the WSR-88D’s capability to support weather warning operations that are critical for life saving and property protection decisions.

The WSR-88D ROC contact for wind farm issues is: wind.energy.matters@noaa.gov.

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WSR-88D Electronic Technical Manual Distribution

For the past several years the ROC has distributed WSR-88D technical manuals (TM) on compact discs (CDs) in Adobe PDF format. The CDs are developed and distributed during major software builds (i.e. Build 10.0, 11.0, etc.), and this practice will continue.

In recent years, the ROC has also issued software updates (i.e. 10.1, 11.1, etc.) and minor hardware modifications (i.e. Modification Notes, Electronic Equipment Modifications (EEMs), and Time Compliance Technical Orders (TCTOs)); however, the ROC does not distribute new TM CDs for software updates or minor hardware modifications.

Each time a TM revision or change is required for software updates or minor hardware modifications, the ROC places the updated TM PDFs on the ROC website, which may be downloaded by authorized users.

To find the TM PDFs, log onto the ROC webpage (<http://www.roc.noaa.gov/WSR88D/>) and select System Documentation/Tech Manuals from the menu on the left-hand side of the page. If you have questions/comments please contact Danny Green at danny.g.green@noaa.gov.

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