

"Because every drop counts!"

What is CoCoRaHS?

CoCoRaHS is a unique, non-profit community based network of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow).



"By using low-cost measurement tools, stressing training and education, and utilizing an interactive Web-site, our aim is to provide the highest quality data for natural resource, education and research applications."





1) Precipitation is important and highly variable

2) Data sources are few and rain gauges are far apart



Legend (in inches)				
Under 34	42 to 44			
34 to 36	44 to 46			
26 to 38	16 to 18			
38 to 40				
💻 40 to 42	Above 50			

This is a map of annual precipitation averaged over the period 1961-1990. Station observations were collected from the NOAA Cooperative and USDA-NRCS SnoTel networks, plus other state and local networks. The PRISM modeling system was used to create the gridded estimates from which this map was made. The size of each grid pixel is approximately 4x4 km. Support was provided by the NRCS Water and Climate Center.

> Copyright 2000 by Spatial Climate Analysis Service, Oregon State University

3) Measurements from many sources are not always accurate (especially snow)

4) There is almost no quantitative data being collected about hail



5) Storm reports can save lives



Who uses CoCoRaHS Data?

- National Weather Service
- Other Meteorologists
- Hydrologists
- Emergency Managers
- City Utilities
 - -Water supply
 - -Water conservation
 - -Storm water
- Insurance adjusters
- USDA Crop production
- Engineers
- Scientists studying storms
- Mosquito control
- Ranchers and Farmers
- Outdoor & Recreation

- Teachers and Students
 - Geoscience education tool
 - Taking measurements
 - Analyzing data
 - Organizing results
 - Conducting research
 - Helping the community



Radar Image from National Weather Service: KGWX 23:27 UTC 02/23/200

Who Sponsors CoCoRaHS?

The National Science Foundation

Colorado State University

USDA

US Bureau of Reclamation

National Weather Service Local Offices

Individual Contributors

As well as many others

What is FROST?



- Started through a collaboration with Colorado State and CoCoRaHS
- FROST is Pennsylvania's version of CoCoRaHS
- We want to collect data on Frost, Rain, Optics, Snow, and Thunder



Things <u>we need from you</u> before you can participate as an observer



hoto by Henry Reges

	OMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE RAIN, HAIL, AND SNOW NETWORK (www.cocoratis.org)
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A completed application form (on-line or paper)



Your location – so we can produce accurate maps. Just having your address may not be good enough. We have to pinpoint it just as close as we can.

Your commitment



Your commitment to collect accurate scientific data

Your willingness to receive CoCoRaHS e-mails

Please make sure that CoCoRaHS e-mails are not blocked from reaching you by your spam blocking software.

It's important that we contact you from time to time to let you know about things happening with CoCoRaHS.

coco@anvil.atmos.colostate.edu info@cocorahs.org nolan@ccc.atmos.colostate.edu cocorahsqc@msn.com

Things you will need before you can participate as an observer



A sincere desire to help study and learn about storms





A training packet (will be mailed to you)

A unique station number and a station name (we will assign you one)



A login ID and password to enter data

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The ability to gather accurate data and transmit it in a timely fashion (telephone or internet capabilities)





Setting up your Equipment

Location! Location! Location!



It's the key to good data



Places not to place your gauge



The #1, all time worst place to put you rain gauge is to leave it in the box it came in !



Using your gauge to hold up your gutter downspout is not a wise choice either.





You'll want to avoid placing it under trees as well



Avoid placing it near or under any structure

Although convenient, the deck is still too close to the house

Also avoid placing it near:

–Sprinklers
–Animals (dogs, birds, etc.)
–Steep slopes



^{>hoto} by G. Pearson

Mountain Lions?

and

... anything that would artificially increase or decrease your gauge catch



This can cause updrafting during strong winds, which may reduce your gauge catch



Photo by M. Suedul

Distance from obstacles

 In <u>open areas</u> strive to be <u>twice as far</u> from obstacles as they are high.

 In <u>developed areas</u> strive to be <u>as far</u> from obstacles as they are high.

Distance between Trees



Ideally, place your gauge equidistant from the nearest trees

Height above the ground

In open areas place the gauge top approx.
2 feet off the ground.

*To improve gauge catch by reducing wind speed

 In developed areas place the gauge top approx. 5 feet off the ground.

*To improve gauge catch by reducing the impact of nearby obstacles




Make sure your gauge is level





Be sure to bevel the top of the post



This will help reduce precipitation splashing into the gauge

Snow board placement



Most times you can place your snow board in the same location as your hail pad. You can even use your hail pad holder as your snow board.

You will want to pay attention to snow accumulation patterns after the first few snows and then modify your location as needed

Now we are ready to measure some precipitation!





Frost



When observing frost, estimate how much of the surface is covered.

-Photo © http://www.ian-barton.com/photoblog/archives/000099.html



Reading your Rain Gauge



When should we read our gauges?

7:00AM is preferred

Between 5:00AM and 9:00AM is OK

Other times are accepted, but they will not appear on CoCoRaHS Maps

5 24

Reading your rain gauge

- Reading the rain gauge is easy but accuracy & consistency are important
- Here are the most common situations you may encounter when reading your gauge.



Your most common observation



... will be zero, (0.00), nada, naught, nothing

It is important for the network to know that it did <u>NOT</u> rain. Please report zeros.



When only a drop or two wet the gauge record a "T" for Trace

Between "T" and "one tenth" of an inch



The surface of the water in the gauge looks curved. How do I know where to read?

As water fills up the measuring tube, a curved surface is formed called a **meniscus**. This meniscus is formed by the surface tension of a liquid in contact with the sides of the tube.

> Always read the bottom of the **meniscus**, when the making your daily rain measurements.



A nice soaking rain



This is "one half" inch it's . . . NOT 5.0, nor 0.05, but 0.50 (kind of like 50 cents out of a dollar)

A good rain



The inner tube holds 1.00 inches

DECIMALS

Getting the decimal point correct is ESSENTIAL

There is a large water difference between 0.90 and 9.00 inches

Water! Water! Everywhere!



When more than an inch of rain falls the precipitation will overflow into the outer cylinder. The whole gauge has a capacity to hold 11 inches.

To measure this amount . . .



Pour out the first inch from the inner tube

Now pour the remaining water into the funnel & measure using the inner tube.



Continue until all of the water has been measured. Make sure you keep track of your amounts along the way. Then add up all of your measurements 1 inch + .97 inches +. .38 inches +.92 inches = 3.77 inches



Optics Corona, 22° Halo, Sundog, Rainbow







Photos © http://www.sundog.clara.co.uk/at optics/phenom.htm

Observing Optics

- Please remember to:
 - NEVER look directly at the sun! This can cause eye damage and even blindness.
 - Note the time and location if possible
 - We welcome pictures!

<u>Atmospheric Optics</u> is a great site that explains each type of optical phenomenon



Let's look at how we measure our winter weather

If snow is anticipated . . .





Remove the funnel and inner tube, otherwise snow will clog the funnel

Snow in your gauge



If you live in a protected area many times you will have an accumulation of snow on the rim of your gauge





How do I know what to measure and what not to??





Take your snow swatter and tap gently on the rim of the gauge

What falls in gauge we measure



We will disregard the snow that lands outside the gauge.



Go ahead and clear away the snow from the gauge

Now you are ready to melt what's in your gauge





Melting snowfall





Add some warm water to the inner cylinder Notice that you have two cylinders

Carefully measure your tap water before adding to outer cylinder



Be sure to measure to nearest hundredth of an inch

Add warm water to the snowfall sample



Pour water directly into sample



Allow sample to completely melt

Measure the liquefied snowfall sample



Pour snow sample into smaller tube



Remember "Every drop counts!"

Carefully read to the nearest one hundredth of an inch
Remember to subtract the amount of warm water that you've added to the tube



The gauge may not always give an accurate measure of snow water content



It may be necessary to take a snow core sample





Shovel your way out the door

Find a representative location





The spot should have not drifted, melted, or blown clear

Steps to cutting a sample



Place gauge upside down into snow



Push down on gauge

Clear the area around gauge





Capture the core



Slide snowswatter under gauge



Make sure gauge is over swatter

Core has been captured





Slowly lift gauge and snowswatter

Ok, now carefully get ready to flip gauge

Flip gauge





Now carefully bring the sample inside to melt

Snow Cores in deeper snow





Again, capture a sample





In wetter snow, the core will come out as one piece





Again, you are now ready to melt the sample





Melting your snow core sample





Add some warm water to the inner cylinder

Notice that you have two cylinders

Carefully measure your tap water before adding to outer cylinder



Be sure to measure to nearest hundredth of an inch

Add warm water to core sample



Pour water directly into sample



Allow sample to completely melt

Measure the liquefied core sample



Pour core sample into smaller tube



Remember "Every drop counts!"

Carefully read to the nearest one hundredth of an inch

Again, remember to subtract the amount of warm water that you've added to the tube

Reading of 0.59 inches of water minus 0.50 inches of water added gives a final reading of 0.09 inches

Tube full0.59- Water added0.50

0.09

Final reading

Record your measurement



Enter you data on your precip sheet . . .

or using the CocoRaHS Web site www.cocorahs.org

We also measure & report snowfall & total depth of snow on the ground

THE PROPERTION

Snowfall



Snowfall is the accumulation of new snow and ice in the past 24 hours prior to melting or settling Snow depth is the average depth of snow (including old snow as well as new) that remains on the ground at a particular time of year.

Where to measure new snowfall

Measure newly fallen snow your snowboard if the snow has fallen and accumulated uniformly.



Snow measured under a tree





Notice that only 3.0 inches of snow has accumulated here

Snow measured in the open





Where as, 6.5 inches has fallen in the open

Angle of Measurement





Measure at eye level, as angle will give you an inaccurate measurement

Replace the Board



After you have measured the snow on your board, clean it off and replace it on top of the newly fallen snow. Now you are ready for the next snowstorm.

Mark the Spot





You will want to use a pole to mark your board so you can find it again after the next storm

If there has been strong winds and drifting you may have to take several measurements and compute the average

Reporting snow on the ground

On some days snow will only partially cover the ground. To record this take an average of both covered and bare areas.

If half the ground has 2.0" and half the ground is bare report 1.0" as your total depth

If more than half the ground is bare report "T" (trace) and mention the range of depths in your comments.

How to Observe Snowflakes

Have a magnifying glass handy





It may help to observe snowflakes on a cold, dark background, like black construction paper.

-Photos © SnowCrystals.com

Identifying Snowflake Shapes





SnowCrystals.com

- Aller

is a useful guide for identifying the shape of snowflakes











-Photos © SnowCrystals.com


One thunder clap includes all sounds that occur within 5 seconds.

Click the speaker symbol to hear examples of thunder claps

What's the CoCoRaHS Web site like?

The CoCoRaHS Web site www.cocorahs.org



Our Web site is informative and easy to use. Here's how to begin \rightarrow

Login to CoCoRaHS

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	For questions or com	ments concerning this web	page please contact the <u>webmaster.</u>	

First, Click to Login

Recording your Daily Precipitation

ORAHS COM	IMUNITY COLL	ABORATIVE RAIN, "Because every dro	HAIL & SNOW	NETWORK		4
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- Select Report Type	Station Name :	Fort Collins 3.5 SW				
- Select Report Type Daily Precipitation Hail Intense Precipitation Multi-Day Precipitation Monthly Zeros	3/1/2005 🛟 7:00 AM 💟 0.00	Observation Date Observation Time Total Precipitation (in i	nches) 🞯			
Main Menu	⊙ Yes ◯ No	Report was taken at re	gistered location?			
Home Join Cocorahs Contact Us In the Spotlight States	Notes			< 2		
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	0.0	Total Depth of Snow or Snow Water Equivalen	n Ground (in inches) 🥝 t (SWE) 🞯			
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After you login, the screen will automatically take you to the Daily Precip. Report

Enter Your Report



Here you will enter the total precipitation measured in your gauge

Recording Comments

ORaHS COM	MMUNITY COLLA	BORATIVE RAIN, "Because every drop	Hail & Snow	Network		
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Enter My Reports	Precipitation Report	<u>Form</u>	Submit Data	Reset		
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List/Edit My Reports	2/16/2005 😂	Observation Date 🥥				
Select Report Type 💌	8:00 AM	Observation Time 🞯				
	0.95	Total Precipitation (in inc	hes) 🞯			
Main Menu	⊙ Yes O No	Report was taken at regi	stered Precipitation (rain or that fell in the rain o	the melted water of gauge for the past 2	content of snow) 24-hours ending at	
Home Join Cocorahs	Notes	th the lew dust 26P W	7:00 am today.			
<u>Contact Us</u> In the Spotlight	overnight	ch che iow just 200 i	out neavy showlall			
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	NA	Core Precipitation (in inc	hes) 🞯			
	NA	Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) 🥝			
4						
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Feel free to enter comments about the day's weather under "notes"

Submit your Report



Click "Submit" and your data is recorded on our site

To See Your Report on the Map



Go to your state page and then click on your county

Your Report on our Daily Map



The amount of precipitation you entered shows up at your location on the map

Pennsylvania State Page



For more information on CoCoRaHS please contact our Pennsylvania State Coordinator:

Each CoCoRaHS State has it's own page which is updated daily

Home
About Us

Join Cocorahs
 Contact Us

Other Reports

- Hail Report
- Intense Precipitation Report
- Monthly Zeros

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Multi-Day Precipitation Report
 Daily Precipitation Report

Hail Report

	My Data Entry : Ha	il Report Form		
Enter My Reports	Hail Report Form	Submit Data Reset		
	Station Number: CO-	_R-610		
Select Report Type 💟	Station Name : Fort	Collins 3.5 SW		
Select Report Type Bally Precipitation	3/4/2005 😂	Date of storm 🥝		
Hail	7:00 AM 💟	Time Hail Began 🥝		
Muni-Day Precipitation	⊙ Yes ◯ No	Report was taken at registered location?		
Monthly Zeros	Size of hailstones			
Main Men J	Smallest	Not Selected		
Home Join Cocorahs	Average	Not Selected		
<u>Contact Us</u>	Largest	Not Selected		
In the Spotlight	Hail Lasted			
States	Minutes	This time is accurate within 1 min.	_	X
<u>Colorado</u>	Hailfall was:	◯ Continuous ◯ Intermittent		
Kansas New Mexico	Hailstones were:			
• Wyoming	🔲 Hard 🛄 Soft 🛄 Clear Ice	White Ice Mixed (Check all that apply)		
	Was there more rain than	hail? 🔿 Yes 🔿 No		
	Hail Started:			
	OBefore rain O	After rain O Same time as rain		
	Largest Hail Started			
	OBefore smaller hail (After smaller hail 🛛 🔿 Same time as smaller hail		
	Damage?			
	If the storm caused damage	, please specify. (Check all that apply)		
🕘 Done			🎯 Internet	

Click here to access a Hail Report

Intense Precipitation Report

ORaHS COM	MUNITY COLLABOI	RATIVE RAIN, HAIL & SNOW	Network	
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Enter My Reports	Intense Precipitation Repo	Submit Data	Reset	
	Station Number: CO-L	R-610		
- Select Report Type	Station Name : Fort	Collins 3.5 SW		
Daily Precipitation	⊙ Yes ◯ No	Report was taken at registered locatio	in?	
Hail	3/1/2005	Observation Date		
Multi-Day Precipitation	7:00 AM	Observation Time		
Monthly Zeros	0.00	Total Precipitation since rain began (ir	n inches)	
Main Menu	0.00	(X.XX) inches of rain has fallen in the p	past	
Home Join Cocorabs		Minutan		
<u>Contact Us</u>	Flooding	windles M		
In the Spotlight	ON			
States	If Yes, how severe?			
<u>Colorado</u>	O Minor (typical). Street or	field flooding.		
Kansas New Mexico	O Unusual street or field flo	oding (only see this every few years)		
Wyoming	O Severe Flooding			
	O Extreme (never seen it th	nis bad before)		
	Notes			
			121	
<pre>e</pre>				🔮 Internet

Click here to access the Intense Precipitation Report

Monthly Zeros



You can go back in and enter days of zero precipitation on one "simple to use" page

Multi-Day Precipitation

COCOREHS COMMUNICACIÓN HOURAND	NITY COLLABORATIVE RA <i>"Because every</i> me States View Data Maps y Data Entry : Multi-Day Pres	IN, HAIL & SNOW NETWO drop counts" My Data My Account Admin Lo cipitation Report Form	DRK
Enter My Reports - Select Report Type • - Select Report Type • Daily Precipitation Hail Intense Precipitation Multi-Day Precipitation Monthly Zeros Main Menu • Home • Join Cocorahs • Contact Us • In the Spotlight States	Itiple Day Accumulation Form ation Number : CO-LR-610 ation Name : Fort Collins 3.5 SW 22/2005 First day of accumulation your last report 1/2005 Date the rain gauge was e 00 AM 00 AM 0.47 Multi Day Precipitation (in NA 0.47 Total Depth of Snow on Gr NA Core Precipitation (in incher	Submit Data Reset	I was away for a week and read the accumulation in my Gauge when I returned.
Colorado Kansas New Mexico Wyoming Done		Submit Data Reset	S Internet

You can even enter information after you've been away for several days

Daily Precipitation Reports

		1000	Contraction of the					1	
	Home States View Data	Maps M	y Data My	Account	t Admir	1 Log	out		
	View Data : List Dai	ly Precipitation	Report	s					
Minus Data	Search Daily Precipitation	Reports							
view Data	Station Fields:	🗆 St	ation Num	ber 🗆 S	tation Na	ame			
Comments Reports	Location: New Mexico 🔤	ALL COUNTIES							
Reports	Date Range:								
ple Day Reports	Start Date: 2/24/2005 💲	End Date: 3/1/200	5 🗘						
on Summary Report	Precip Value: All Precip Va	lues 🔽 Operat	or 0.00	0					
Stations	Search								
	Searched: Stations in New N	Aexico, Report date be	twaan 2011	2005 an	43/1/200	5			
Main Menu	Showing 6 Records.	nexico. Repoir date be	(WCCII 2/24/	2005.41	0.0/1/200	<u>.</u>			
e Cocorahs	Date - <u>Time</u> <u>Station</u> <u>Number</u>	Station Name	<u>Total</u> Precip	<u>New</u> Snow	<u>Total</u> Snow	State	County		
act Us Spotlight	2/28/2005 7:00 AM NM-DA-2	Las Cruces 2.1 WSV	N 0.00	0.00	0.00	NM	Dona Ana	View	
States	2/27/2005 7:00 AM NM-DA-2	Las Cruces 2.1 WSV	W 0.01	0.00	0.00	NM	Dona Ana	View	
Colorado	2/26/2005 7:00 AM NM-DA-2	Las Cruces 2.1 WSV	NT	0.00	0.00	NM	Dona Ana	View	
Mexico ning	2/25/2005 7:00 AM NM-DA-2	Las Cruces 2.1 WSV	N 0.26	0.00	0.00	NM	Dona Ana	View	
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Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to be home everyday to participate in CoCoRaHS?

Answer: No. Report when you are able. If you are gone, you may leave your gauge outside and report a multi-day total when you return.

What if I don't have a good place to put my gauge? Answer: Few people have ideal locations. Do your best. Send sight photos if possible to help interpret results. What if it hails when I'm not at home? <u>Answer</u>: We still would like your hail pad. Report as much info as you can find out from friends and neighbors.

Do I report morning dew that has collected in my rain gauge? <u>Answer</u>: No. That is not precipitation, but you may note the dew in the comments. How long is my commitment to CoCoRaHS? Answer: Ideally, at least one season, but the longer you contribute, the more valuable the data become.

Thanks for joining us today!

 We hope that after learning about CoCoRaHS and FROST today you will consider joining our ever growing network of volunteers.

 If you are already a FROST Volunteer Observer, thank you for coming out today and for your help in making "every drop count!"

That's all folks!

THE END

