

Chatham Upper Air Site (CHH) Being Decommissioned Effective April 1, 2021
Updated: March 15, 2021

The National Weather Service Upper Air Station providing upper air observations from Chatham, Massachusetts - site identifier KCHH, WMO identifier 74494 - will not gather or transmit data after 8 a.m. on March 31. The site will permanently close.

Recent significant erosion of the coastal bluff where the upper air station is located is a safety concern for the personnel who launch weather balloons at the facility and threatens to take the upper air launch building into the sea. As a result of these extenuating circumstances, the site will be decommissioned at the end of the month, with demolition of the buildings scheduled for April.

The National Weather Service is actively seeking a new site for upper air observations in southeastern New England and will provide the community with updates as we learn more.

Nearby upper air sites in [Brookhaven, NY \(OKX\) \(latest sounding\)](#), [Albany, NY \(ALY\) \(latest sounding\)](#) and [Gray, ME \(GYX\) \(latest sounding\)](#) will continue to provide observations for our weather forecast models and help our forecasters deliver accurate and timely watches and warnings. Users of our upper air data can rely on these upper air sites when the Chatham site is decommissioned. Supplemental weather balloon launches at these sites are conducted when weather conditions warrant.

These two AWIPS products will cease effective April 1, 2021. They are for the RAOB Mandatory (MAN) and Significant (SGL) levels observations.

<u>AWIPS PIL</u>	<u>WMO Header</u>
MANCHH	USUS41 KBOX
SGLCHH	UMUS41 KBOX

National Weather Service upper air stations gather observations using [radiosondes](#). At least twice per day, a radiosonde is tied to a weather balloon and is launched from the Chatham upper air station. The radiosonde floats to the upper stratosphere where it collects and sends back data about air pressure, temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and wind direction. Upper-air data are essential for weather prediction and research. More about our observation systems can be found at: <https://www.weather.gov/about/observation-equipment>

[NOAA/National Weather Service's Boston Forecast Office](#), located in Norton, MA., is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for about 8.9 million people in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and northern Connecticut. Join us on Facebook ([NWSBoston](#)) and Twitter ([@NWSBoston](#)).

The upper air station is located in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [Monomoy Wildlife Refuge](#). Here is a statement from that agency about the situation.

"Coastal beaches are dynamic, living landscapes that provide habitat for a range of species and threatened wildlife, such as sea turtles and shorebirds. They also provide natural benefits and services ranging from storm protection to carbon sequestration. In managing these areas, we believe the most cost-effective and sustainable approach is to work with nature unless conditions threaten public safety. Though it is a natural process, coastal shoreline erosion can present management challenges and we know it is an issue of concern to refuge visitors and our neighbors. We are committed to working with partners and landowners to mitigate impacts, adapt operations, and relocate facilities, such as the National Weather Service's Chatham Upper Air Station, as conditions warrant."

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