

Updated alerting from Environment Canada, forecasters

CAROL BALDWIN
Local Journalism Initiative

Environment Canada is transitioning from zone-based Tornado Warnings and Severe Thunderstorm Warnings to a new system of storm-based warnings.

These warnings will be targeted specifically by forecasters based on the storm's location and direction. The United States has been using storm-based warnings for the past 19 years, and an update to Canada's system has been much sought-after by forecasters.

Adam Skinner of Instant Weather Inc. noted that Environment Canada has been attempting to implement the new system for two years, but various setbacks have delayed its rollout.

Under the old system, storm warnings were issued for larger, pre-determined alert zones, which in Saskatchewan often followed municipal boundaries.

This resulted in people receiving warnings about a tornado or severe thunderstorm even if the storm was unlikely to affect them. The new system, called Convective Alert Modernization (CAM), launched this week.

This change is expected to reduce the number of people automatically receiving these warnings, with the greatest improvement seen in rural communities where previous alert zones were massive.

Excessive warnings can lead to 'warning apathy' or 'alert fatigue.' In Waldheim, for instance, several residents reported ignoring the warnings after previous alerts did not result in actual tornadoes.



In the new system, an Environment Canada forecaster will now draw a shape known as 'free-form polygons', enclosing where the storm is currently and where it is expected to travel based on the path it has been following and other environmental factors, including other storms that may be in the area.

The free-form polygons will be used to target the alert sent to cell towers. The new warning system will continue to notify phones outside of the actual alert area if a phone is within the reach of the cell phone towers within the alert area.

However, radio and television alerts will only see marginal improvements, and people at a significant distance away from the storm's path may still receive notifications.

These changes apply specifically to tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings, where

timing and distance can significantly impact outcomes. All other types of alerts, including warnings for winter storms, rainfall, heat, and air quality, will continue to be issued using the existing zone-based system.

The new free-form polygon alerts are an addition to, not a replacement for, the large municipality and county-based alerts. In the event of a failure in the storm-based warning system, the old system will still be utilized.

Historical data from the Northern Tornadoes Project indicates that less than 10 per cent of severe thunderstorms produce tornadoes.

Nevertheless, forecasters will continue to issue warnings whenever the potential for one exists. As of August 7th, 87 tornadoes had been confirmed across the nation, with more than 70 occurring in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

According to information shared with independent forecasters, tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings will currently be issued based on both the zone-based and the new storm-based system.

This dual approach ensures that those in potential danger are informed of the approaching storm. Additionally, AlertReady, the system used for issuing Amber Alerts and other mass notifications, will utilize the storm-based warning system.

An absence of alerts does not guarantee safety in your vicinity, Skinner cautions. Effective alerting is most beneficial when combined with situational awareness rather than serving as a substitute for it.

When an alert is received, take it seriously. Monitor both the sky and radar, as notifications alone may not provide a complete picture of potential threats.

SUPPLIED PHOTO
A storm approaches in the prairies.

Canada sanctions five Iranian officials over blockade of Strait of Hormuz

The Canadian Press

Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand announced new sanctions today on five Iranian officials for undermining "international peace, security and stability" with the blockade in the Strait of Hormuz.

The sanctioned individuals include a senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps official, the head of Iran's foreign policy and national security committee, a naval commander and chair of the Iranian energy exporters union.

The sanctions note says that about 1,500 vessels were stranded in the Persian Gulf as of Aug. 6.

Iran first closed the Strait of Hormuz after the U.S. and Israel launched joint strikes against the country on Feb. 28, causing major disruption to global energy markets.

These sanctions prohibit Canadians from dealing with listed individuals and freeze any Canadian assets they may have.

Canada has sanctioned 232 individuals and 260 entities linked to Iran's intelligence, security and economic networks.

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BUSINESS

Market Watch

S&P/TSX 36,730.27 -29.02	S&P 500 7,785.76 -13.23	DOW 53,732.41 -107.58	NASDAQ 26,729.16 -73.86	DOLLAR 72.07¢US +0.32¢	OIL per barrel US\$82.40 \$1.15	GOLD US\$4,437.30 +\$16.90
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PUBLIC NOTICES

**Medicine Hat**

8AM - 4PM SPECIAL SERVICES

Electric Outages	403.529.8260
Gas Emergency	403.529.8191
Water & Sewer Emergency.....	403.502.8042
After Hours Special Services	403.526.2828

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS APPROVED AUGUST 6 TO AUGUST 12, 2026

RESIDENTIAL

363 STERLING CRESCENT SE - Detached House
439 4 AVENUE SW - Residential Accessory Building (Garage)

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/ INSTITUTIONAL

16 941 SOUTH RAILWAY STREET SE - Change Of Use To Office, Minor And Health Care Office, Minor
2850 54 STREET SE - Campground

HOME BUSINESS

156 1 STREET NE - Home Business Minor - Mobile Food Vendor (Wings).
15 7 STREET SW - Home Business Minor - Craft Show/Flea Market Organizer.
24 REDWOOD STREET SE - Home Business Minor - Teaching.
2201 63 VISTA CLOSE SE - Home Business Minor - Online Sales.
59 HAMPTONS WAY SE - Home Business Minor - Service (Exhaust Cleaning).



What's Happening
IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



Scan code
to view development
notices online
(updated weekly)

A person claiming to be affected by a decision of the Development Authority may appeal to the Medicine Hat Subdivision and Development Appeal Board by completing and submitting to the City Clerk Department, the required Notice of Appeal form within twenty one (21) days of this publication. Forms available from: City Clerk Dept., 3rd Floor, City Hall or City website: www.medicinehat.ca.

All Development Permits listed are subject to conditions. For more information, contact Planning and Development Services, 2nd Floor, City Hall. Ph. (403) 529-8374.

FIRE HYDRANT INSPECTIONS & WATER MAIN FLUSHING

Environmental Utilities maintenance crews perform regular, routine maintenance to uphold the waterworks system infrastructure and water quality by annually inspecting fire hydrants and flushing water mains.

During these operations, there may be some discolouration in the water which is **not** harmful to consume and will dissipate when flushing is complete.

It is important to note that discoloured water should not be used for laundry, and that fluctuating water pressure may also be noticed.

Should discolouration persist over three hours, turn on a cold-water faucet or an outside sprinkler and let the water run for several minutes until the water runs clear.

For additional information or to confirm whether crews are working in your zone, refer to the Water Flushing information on the City's website at www.medicinehat.ca/water or contact Environmental Utilities at 403-529-8176.

www.medicinehat.ca

Anxious Canadian firms bet Trump will buckle before 50% tariff deadline

CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS
The Canadian Press

Companies are opting to wait and see as the clock ticks down on U.S. President Donald Trump's latest tariff deadline, rather than rushing shipments across the border to beat the buzzer, industry insiders say.

A new round of 50 per cent tariffs on nearly US\$20 billion worth of Canadian goods ranging from dairy to down jackets is set to take effect Aug. 19. Unlike most of Trump's other tariffs, the duties would not exempt goods that comply with the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement, a trade deal widely known as CUSMA.

In spite of the looming threat, business owners have avoided front-loading their shipments, said Janine Harker, president of the Canadian Society of Customs Brokers.

"For better or for worse, everybody has settled into a process of watchful waiting — and planning to the extent possible, but very much not trying to get too ahead of what actually comes out as the official direction on Aug. 19," she said.

In the meantime, businesses continue to track whether the president will live up to his perceived proclivity for bluffing or backing down on tariff pledges — among others — which has given rise to the acronym known as TACO (Trump Always Chickens Out).

"We're getting a little bit blasé. Trump never follows through — TACO," said John Corey, who heads the Freight Management Association of Canada.

He pointed to several unfulfilled threats, including the president's vow late last month "to put a big tariff on Canada because of the smoke," as haze from Canadian wildfires drifted across the border to blanket swaths of the U.S.

"People are starting to see there's a lot of bluster, but not

much comes of it," said Corey, who views the White House pronouncements as a negotiating tactic amid a review of CUSMA.

Others aren't so sure. "The feedback that we're getting so far is that it will be implemented," said Alain Bédard, CEO of TFI International Inc., Canada's largest trucking firm, on a recent call with analysts.

Despite that uncertainty, he's seen little evidence of a behavioural shift by shippers.

"We're not seeing any movement that's exceptional, like pre-buying or pre-shipping because of the 30-day implementation deadline," he said on July 27.

"This is not the same as what we've seen in Q1 (2025), where everybody was trying to chase volumes into the U.S. prior to tariffs."

Through much of last year, retailers and exporters across the globe rushed to beat American tariff deadlines that shifted constantly by way of temporary reprieves, pauses and extensions. Now, with Canadian shippers more desensitized to the trade tumult, their preparations have taken different forms, such as assessing the potential financial toll.

Customs brokers are scrambling to help clients review their products and supply chains to determine whether the goods fall under the threatened tariff regime, said Harker.

"Many importers were just getting their heads around whether or not their goods were compliant with the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement," she said. Some took steps to obtain certification under the trade pact. For a raft of products, that compliance could be meaningless by next week.

For some, numbness to White House whims may have morphed into resignation. Dave Pentland, vice-presi-

dent of Carson International, a licensed customs broker based in Vancouver, has been churning out reports for clients on the short-term cost of the "worst-case scenario."

About one-fifth of them are hurrying to push cargo across the border before Wednesday, he said, but the rest are hoping — or praying — the deadline is merely a bargaining tool.

Front-loading may seem pointless if a 50 per cent tariff renders their exports to America financially unsustainable, effectively wiping out that portion of their business overnight, Pentland said.

"They'd all just stop," he said, pointing to clients in the garment and paper product industries in particular. "It's going to hurt Canada if it goes through."

Some two-thirds of the country's roughly \$3 billion in annual apparel and textile exports land in the U.S., according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity.

"There's a real niche in Canada for people that import foreign fabric and then they're able to make the goods qualify under CUSMA," Pentland said. "That's a lot of small- and medium-sized companies."

Canada-U.S. Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc and Janice Charette, Canada's chief trade negotiator, have been in Washington since Monday for talks and a pair of meetings with U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer.

Greer said Friday that the discussions were "constructive" but that Canada would have to lift its retaliatory measures in order to avoid new tariffs.

The Trump administration says the new duties are a response to provincial bans on U.S. alcohol, Canada's supply-managed dairy system and quotas on certain U.S. vehicles.

-- with files from Kelly Geraldine Malone