

Weather Software Makes Storm Monitoring Easier

Now you have the ability to monitor local weather radar, spotter reports, and National Weather Service watches and warnings as they happen for any point in the United States.

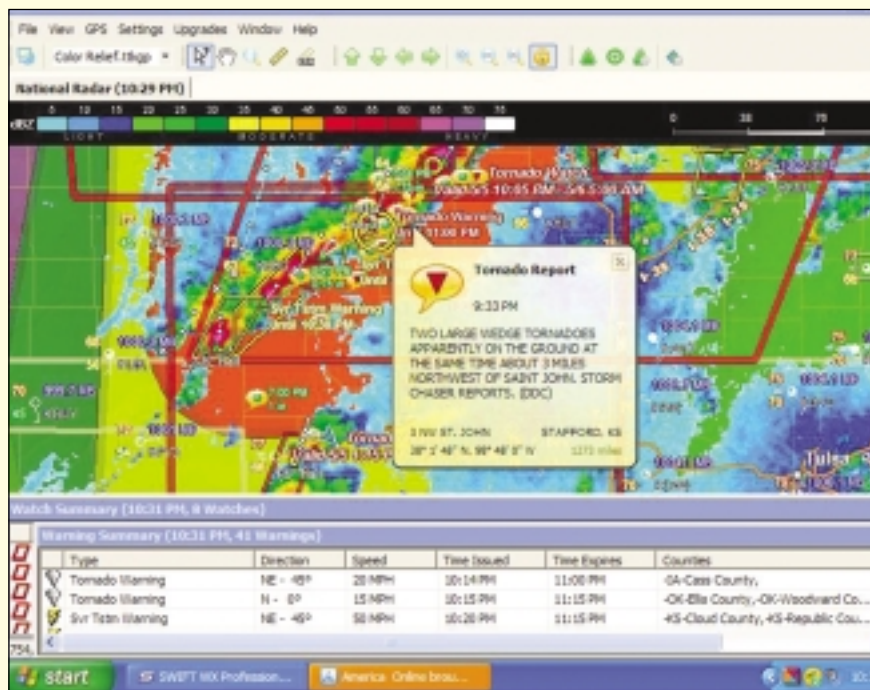
Swift WX Professional is an automated internet downloading and GPS integration tool written for storm chasers, storm spotters, and emergency management personnel that is now available for consumers.

If you have an internet connection you can use Swift WX. The new software for consumers allows you to stay ahead of deadly weather and keep your family protected with advance warnings—even before the weather person makes public announcements.

Swift WX, which was designed by tornado chasers, features more than 1100 weather maps, weather radar down to the street level, GPS tracking, perimeter alerts/first alerts, and up-to-the-minute data feeds from 140 weather-service offices. The software allows you to track your position over any weather map by plotting your current position over radar, satellite, or surface maps by using GPS technology. If you are a storm chaser, you will know where the storm is and how to intercept it.

With Swift WX's storm-tracking technology, you will be able to see the path of severe storms, including thunderstorms and tornadoes, on any weather map, indicating bearing, intensity, and velocity. You can also drill down into storm data, viewing reporting stations, cell ID, direction, speed, and other important variables.

Swift WX is geared for storm chasers in pursuit of severe weather, spotters observing and reporting, and emergency managers acting with safety. Using predefined catalogs, users can download only the pertinent weather data without browsing through pages of irrelevant information. Users also can animate a time series of maps to view a storm's progression. Swift WX includes a layer of interstates and major highways, but you may add more detailed, county-level streets by importing GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping



Swift WX gives you the opportunity to track severe weather in any part of the country. (Screen capture by WA3PZO)

files. One source of these files is the U.S. Census Bureau. *Note:* The program does not integrate with other mapping software.

Whether you are a seasoned meteorologist or just someone interested in studying the weather, the Swift WX support staff participates in a user forum where questions can be asked or even suggestions offered for new features. One feature that is being developed by a user is an overlay map showing various radio frequencies in use in an area. These can include NOAA weather radio frequencies, as well as amateur radio repeaters and SKYWARN frequencies. In fact, the software user community regularly contributes modifications to the program. Besides the mapping overlays, you can have tables appear with different watches and warnings. When information appears,

you can click on a link to see the actual information from the National Weather Service. Plus, those who are interested in learning more about the weather can receive e-mail with weather tutorials.

For the two weeks that I had the opportunity to use Swift WX, the weather in Texas, Kansas, and other states brought death and massive destruction. Having the mapping tools at my desk enabled me to see the path of the severe storms, reports of tornadoes on the ground, reports of hail and flash-flooding, and other information before it was on the local TV news. It gave me one source on the web to find the information I was interested in without having to search various weather service websites. For further information, visit <www.swiftwx.com>.