

Meeting Summary, 8 March 2004 meeting of the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Meteorological Society.

The Central Illinois Chapter of the American Meteorological Society (CIAMS) held the second regular meeting of the 2003-2004 year at Chevy's Chevy's Fresh Mex in Champaign on Monday, March 8, 2004. The scheduled meeting for January 26, 2004 was cancelled due to bad traveling weather. 33 people attended. The meeting began at 7:00 PM. President Mike Tannura opened the meeting by giving a report on the chapter's future plans about how to further educate the general public about how severe weather information gets disseminated and what it all means. Mike Spinar of the Education Committee also gave a report about this process and handed out a flow chart that he developed that will be useful for the eventual development of literature that can be handed out to teachers or at future pertinent outreach events such as science fairs. Treasurer Maria Peters gave the financial report and is collecting dues for the current year.

Bob Scott of the Illinois State Water Survey informed the group about changes recent updates to their website. Bob also wanted information about an "unknown emergency alert" that was showing up on his NOAA weather radio. Chris Miller, Lincoln NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist, clarified this issue by noting that certain brands of weather radios cannot adequately handle the new all hazards notifications such as the AMBER alerts.

The featured speaker for this meeting was Harold Dameron of the Bureau of Operations with the Illinois Department of Transportation. Harold's topic was "Winter Highway Operations: Emerging Technologies". Mr. Dameron gave a brief update on the latest snowplow technology including Automatic Vehicle Locating via GPS. Although this technology is expensive, many are using it successfully to show the public, as well as dispatchers, where plows have been and their current location. Most of the evening, Mr Dameron discussed the Roadway Weather Information System (RWIS) that consists of 51 stations, located mostly in the northern 2/3 portion of Illinois, that measure various weather and pavement parameters. A picture of one of the RWIS sites is shown below as well as Internet links to RWIS information. RWIS stations began operations in 1993 and have been expanding into southern Illinois this year. RWIS has saved millions of dollars every year in snow removal costs for the State of Illinois. RWIS and consultants weather forecasts help in making cost effective decisions about manpower, equipment, and proper selection of chemicals. Preemptive

weekly strikes of brine are also used during the winter. Mr. Dameron discussed new corn-based anti-icing products as well as the use of fixed anti-icing equipment for perennial trouble spots. Training operators how to use the RWIS system using scenario based computer training was also discussed. Illinois is an active member of Aurora, a winter states consortium for RWIS research.

After questions the meeting adjourned at 9:27 PM.
Tom Bellinger, Secretary, 2003-2004.



Mr. Harold Dameron of the Illinois Department of Transportation.



One of the sites from the Illinois Roadway Weather Information System.

Link to the Illinois RWIS data:

<http://gis.dot.state.il.us/idotgis/rwis/presentation/basic/map.asp?Cmd=INIT&ExtentLeft=1920280.2643213982%20&ExtentRight=3058450.927141207%20&ExtentBottom=125491.10558196157%20&ExtentTop=2131015.066336367>

More information:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov////////winter/roadsvr/CS039.htm>

Link to Aurora:

<http://www.aurora-program.org/>