

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why do we need a weather station?

A: Traditional radar coverage is unreliable due to signal blockage from the mountains. Ground-based stations provide real-time, accurate data which can be used for forecasting and emergency response.

Q: How long have other stations been active for?

A: The original Oklahoma Mesonet went live in 1994 and is still operational. Since then, 38 states have established mesonets. Vermont is one of twelve states *without* this critical weather monitoring infrastructure.

Q: How are locations chosen?

A: Rigorous suitability analyses are performed, accounting for land cover, elevation, proximity to dams, among other factors. The intention is to locate one site for each county in Vermont to ensure statewide weather coverage.

Q: Can I collect this data for personal use?

A: Yes, the data from mesonets are intended to be used and accessed by anyone. The "Wisconet," the University of Wisconsin - Madison network, is an example of what our data portal will look like when it is live.

Q: Is the tower grounded in case of lightning strikes?

A: Yes, the tower is grounded to ensure safety.

Q: Are the listed station dimensions accurate?

A: Yes, the tower is 10 meters tall, and the total area occupied will not exceed 10 x 10 meters.

Q: Will you be notified if any part of the station breaks, malfunctions, or stops working?

A: Yes, data is transmitted in near real-time, so we will be able to tell when an instrument stops recording data.

Q: Is the station like a cell tower?

A: No, the station will operate like a phone, making direct communication with the server, and nothing else. It uses a 250MB (0.25GB) 4G Verizon plan. The average household uses 700GB of data monthly; this station will use less than 0.0004% of this.

Q: How stable is the station? Will instruments come loose?

A: The tower is fixed to a concrete pad and is very stable. The instruments are designed for extreme-weather research and are highly unlikely to blow away.

Q: What is the installation process like? How often is maintenance performed?

A: Maintenance is performed twice yearly, once before winter, and once during spring or summer. Visits will be made as needed to perform repairs. Installation requires contractor work in order to dig and pour concrete, ensuring tower stability. The rest of installation can be completed in as little as one day.

Q: Will the tower create any noise or vibrations?

A: No, the tower will not create any noises or vibrations.