

PRISM Update Schedule

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Several updates of a PRISM grid are produced over a six-month period to ensure that most station data changes and additions are incorporated and quality control procedures conducted. In the PRISM web service, the update number is called the **Grid Count**. Below are summaries of the daily and monthly update schedules.

Daily Update Schedule

The PRISM map sequence is first updated to include a particular day about 24 hours after it has ended (Grid Count = 1). Note that a “PRISM Day” is defined as the 24-hour period ending at 1200 UTC on that day, e.g., a grid for July 2 covers the period 1200 UTC July 1 – 1200 UTC July 2. A second update (Grid Count = 2) is made after five days have elapsed; the five-day milestone was chosen because a large amount of new station data is typically received at this point. These first two updates rely on automated QC systems to identify and remove erroneous data.

The third update (Grid Count = 3) is produced during what is termed the “monthly update,” which is typically completed on about the 15th of the following month. At this time, mapping of monthly, in addition to daily, data is performed, and additional QC is done by skilled meteorologists who visually inspect the maps and make adjustments to correct erroneous station data and address other quality issues. As part of the monthly update, the daily and monthly precipitation grids undergo a reconciliation process to ensure that the sums of the daily grid values equal the monthly grid values. During the reconciliation process, station data may be added or omitted, and grid values changed.

Updates 4-8 (Grid Counts = 4-8) are produced during the monthly updates on or around the 15th of the subsequent five months. Update 8 (Grid Count = 8) is considered the “final” update, until a new version of the historical dataset is produced sometime in the future.

Monthly Update Schedule

The monthly schedule is similar to that for daily mapping, except that a 5-day update is not done. The first update (Grid Count = 1) is run on the first of the following month. The second through seventh updates (Grid Count = 2-7) are done during the monthly updates, which are completed on about the 15th of the following five months. Update 7 (Grid Count = 7) is considered the “final” update, until a new version of the historical dataset is produced.