

## REAL-WORLD METEOROLOGY

*A series of profiles celebrating a half-century of Certified Consulting Meteorologists*



**Who:** Stephen M. Wistar

**What:** Senior forensic meteorologist

**When:** CCM since 2000

**Where:** AccuWeather

**Why:** To improve his credentials as an expert witness



**How:** In 1976, Wistar joined AccuWeather and spent 20 years as an operational weather forecaster for radio, television, and newspaper clients. In the mid-1990s, he moved over to the AccuWeather Forensic Department, where he is currently based. As a senior forensic meteorologist, his time is spent discussing cases with clients, performing the necessary research, and then preparing written reports detailing the weather conditions at a particular place and time in the past. Occasionally, his responsibilities take him into a courtroom to serve as an expert witness in a case in which the weather is a significant factor. In the late 1990s, Wistar worked on numerous projects that required reconstruction of a roof that collapsed under the weight of accumulated snow and ice. More recently, his work has been dominated by reconstruction of timelines of wind versus water for hundreds of property locations impacted by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana.

**In His Own Words:** “Since many attorneys care about the credentials of an expert witness they would choose to retain, I decided in 1998 to become a Certified Consulting Meteorologist. I found the process to be moderately difficult, although at the same time some of the questions on the initial take-home examination were quite interesting. For me, the most difficult part of the process was the oral examination in front of the CCM Board at the 2000 AMS Annual Meeting. I found this test to be fair and reasonable, but made more difficult by the nervousness I experienced at the time. I was more than gratified to learn in April 2000 that I had passed and could add those three letters after my name.

“Clients who seek out the AccuWeather Forensic Department are usually made aware that we have a CCM on the staff. Details of the rigorous process of obtaining the CCM credential are often brought out when I give a deposition or trial testimony. The passion that has fueled my journey from a meteorologically inspired young child to a CCM specializing in forensics continues to make each case I work on rewarding and inspiring.”

For more information on the Certified Consulting Meteorologist (CCM) Program, please visit the AMS Web site at [www.ametsoc.org/amscert/index.html](http://www.ametsoc.org/amscert/index.html).