

NASA, NOAA ready GOES-P satellite for launch

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NASA's GOES-P meteorological satellite is lifted into the mobile service tower at Launch Complex 37 on Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. Credit: NASA/Jack Pfaller

NASA is preparing to launch the NOAA Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-P (GOES-P) from Space Launch Complex 37 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The launch is targeted for March 2, during a launch window from 6:19 to 7:19 p.m. EST.

"GOES are the backbone of NOAA's severe [weather](#) forecasts, monitoring fast-changing conditions in the atmosphere that spawn

hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and other hazards," said Steve Kirkner, GOES program manager at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

GOES-P is the third and final spacecraft to be launched in the GOES N Series of geostationary environmental weather satellites. The GOES satellites continuously provide observations of more than 50 percent of the Earth, including the continental United States, providing weather monitoring and forecast operations and a continuous and reliable stream of environmental information and severe weather warnings.

In addition to weather forecasting on Earth, a key instrument onboard GOES-P, the Solar X-Ray Imager (SXI), will help NOAA continue monitoring solar conditions.

"The SXI is improving our forecasts and warnings for solar disturbances, protecting billions of dollars worth of commercial and government assets in space and on the ground, and lessening the brunt of power surges for the satellite-based electronics and communications industry," said Tom Bodgan, director of NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) in Boulder, Colo.

GOES-P joins a system of weather satellites that provide timely environmental information to meteorologists and the public. The GOES system provides data used to graphically display the intensity, path and size of storms. Early warning of impending severe weather enhances the public's ability to take shelter and protect property.

GOES-P will be launched on board a United Launch Alliance Delta IV (4, 2) launch vehicle under a FAA commercial license. The satellite will be turned over to NASA after the successful checkout is completed by Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems, El Segundo Calif.

Currently, NOAA operates GOES-12, (GOES East) and GOES-11 (GOES-West.) In late April, NOAA will activate GOES-13 to replace GOES-12 and will drift eastward from 105 degrees West longitude to 75 degrees West longitude. NOAA plans to move GOES-12 to 60 degrees West longitude to provide coverage for South America as part of the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS). NASA handed over GOES-14, launched last June, to NOAA on December 14, 2009. It will remain in normal mode at the 105W storage longitude to provide operational X-ray Sensor coverage to NOAA's SWPC.

Once in orbit GOES-P will be designated GOES-15, checked out and then stored on-orbit and ready for activation should one of the operational GOES satellites degrade or exhaust their fuel.

NOAA manages the GOES program, establishes requirements, provides all funding and distributes environmental satellite data for the United States. NASA Goddard procures and manages the design, development and launch of the satellites for NOAA on a cost reimbursable basis. Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems built GOES-P.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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