About weather maps

These weather maps are drawn from two anonymous *ftp* sites, *vmd.cso.uiuc.edu:/wx* and *unidata.ucar.edu:/images*.
When you click on an item, a background process fetches the maps, puts them in */tmp/W_maps/...,* and displays them.   The maps are *GIF* files, and should open in a viewer (like *ViewGif*).   This takes a minute or two, depending on the size of the images and the traffic on the net.
Note that when you quit this *Weather* program, the images in */tmp* will be removed.

There are three kinds of images Ð *surface weather maps*, showing temperatures and other information from surface weather stations; *radar maps*, which show storm systems; and *satellite photographs*, which

show visible and infrared satellite photos of north america.   These images are updated roughly every hour.

Surface weather maps are like the symbolic maps you are used to seeing in newspapers.   The *Key to weather map symbols* may be helpful in understanding what's going on.   A useful map to look at is the *US surface & radar*, which shows the latest surface data and radar analysis combined.   Each of these pictures is about 40Kbytes.

Satellite photos are just that Ð unretouched photos of North America from the GOES-7 weather satellite.   Look for a familiar spit of land (Baja, or Florida) to situate things.   These images are larger, up to 500 Kbytes each.

Sometimes other maps are available on these and other *ftp* sites Ð

Aurora Borealis maps, for example, retrieves maps of auroral forecasts that are occasionally posted by the solar terrestrial dispatch.   (Look on **solar.stanford.edu** and **xi.uleth.ca**   for more information on solar happenings).