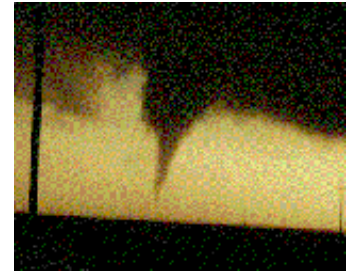




**The West Texas**

# TWISTER



WINTER 2000/2001 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE FORECAST OFFICE LUBBOCK TEXAS

## A MORE TYPICAL WINTER??



According to the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center, this will be the first winter in several that is not dominated by an El Nino or a La Nina. These events typically have a dampening effect on the long-term weather across West Texas during the winter season, which usually results in a fairly persistent weather pattern throughout the winter months. Without the long-term effects of an El Nino or a La Nina, it appears likely that West Texas will experience a weather pattern that is marked by extreme variability with prolonged cold snaps and periods of warm weather anticipated. Therefore, this winter season will likely be more "winter-like" than the past three winters in the Southern Plains, which have been very mild.

There are signs that the highly variable weather pattern that will likely dominate our upcoming winter is already in place. The extreme drought conditions that persisted across West Texas this summer and early fall, which included the driest September and the second driest August on record, were immediately followed by considerable rainfall during much of October.

Continued on Page 2

## No El Nino or La Nina This Winter

Continued from Page 1

According to the Climate Prediction Center, this period of rainfall was both widespread enough and heavy enough to bring the area's soil moisture conditions back to near normal (see drought severity map on page 5.)

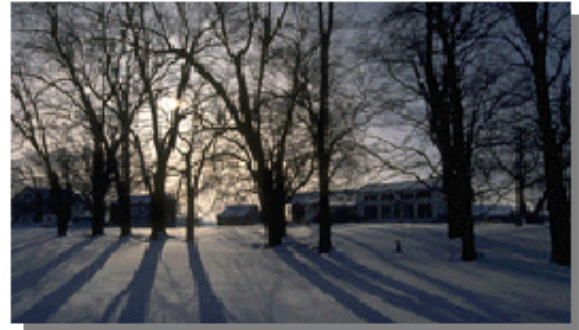
Temperature extremes were just as evident already this fall. In late September, portions of the extreme southwestern Panhandle experienced their first freeze of the season. The average date of the first freeze in the fall for this area is in the last week of October. On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the latest recorded date that the temperature reached 100 degrees occurred at Lubbock International Airport. Only a few days later, on October 8<sup>th</sup>, the earliest recorded snowfall occurred at the airport.

The odds are pretty good that the Southern Plains will continue to experience this highly variable weather pattern through the upcoming winter months.

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## NWS Winter Weather Products

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Our office will likely issue a number of winter weather products this winter for the South Plains, extreme southern Texas Panhandle and the Low Rolling Plains. Here's a summary of the conditions that we expect when we issue each of these products:

**Winter Weather Outlook** - significant winter weather is possible in the next 36 to 72 hours. The timing, precise track, and forecast intensity of the storm may be uncertain and thus specific details may still be undetermined. There is a high enough likelihood of adverse winter weather to highlight the potential event to the public.

**Winter Storm Watch** - significant and potentially dangerous winter weather is possible in the next 12 to 36 hours. Heavy snow of 4 inches or more; or ice accumulations of 1/4 of an inch or more; or sleet accumulations of 1/2 of an inch or more expected.

**Winter Storm Warning** - significant and potentially dangerous winter weather is expected in the next 12 hours. Conditions could lead to injuries or loss of life. Snow, ice and sleet accumulations are the same as those for the winter storm watch. If only one element is expected then the warning may be issued as an event specific warning such as "ice storm warning" or "heavy snow warning".

**Blizzard Warning** - the combination of heavy snow and strong wind will result in blindingly low visibilities and dangerously low wind chills during the next 12 hours.

**Winter Weather Advisory** - a combination of snow amounts of 3 inches or less and light accumulations of ice or sleet will result in hazardous conditions in the next 12 hours. The event is more of an inconvenience than a danger if precautions are taken.

**Snow Advisory** - snowfall amounts of 1 to 3 inches will occur in the next 12 hours.

**Wind Chill Advisory** - wind chill values generally colder than minus 20 degrees F are expected.



The NWS has initiated a new program to help communities prepare themselves to handle hazardous weather. The program is called **StormReady** and consists of a series of steps that will help the community respond to tornadoes, floods, winter storms, etc. Larger cities need to accomplish many steps to be StormReady. However, medium and smaller towns with fewer resources do not need to do quite as much to be given StormReady status.

Any community that earns StormReady certification will be part of a press briefing and media event to announce their accomplishment. Also, the NWS will supply two StormReady road signs that the community can use to proudly show off their accomplishments. If you are interested, please contact Ed Calianese at 806-745-3916 ext. 223 for more details.

### National Weather Service Forecasts

- Telephone – 806-745-4260
- NOAA Weather Radio – 162.40 MHz
- Web Site – [www.srh.noaa.gov/lub](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lub)

### Road Conditions

**Texas DOT** – phone – 1.800.452.9292  
 website – [www.dot.state.tx.us/hcr/main.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/hcr/main.htm)

**New Mexico DOT** - phone – 1.800.432.4269  
 Website - [www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/](http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/)

**Colorado DOT** - phone – 1.303.639.1111

## Useful Winter Weather Information



## NOAA Weather Radio Receivers Make Good Gifts This Holiday Season



Looking for a unique gift idea this holiday season? Consider a potentially life-saving present, a NOAA Weather Radio. Most of these receivers are capable of sounding an alarm whenever the National Weather Service issues a local severe weather or flood alert or other hazard warning.

"A NOAA Weather Radio could save your life some day," says retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Jack Kelly, director of the National Weather Service. "When you may only have minutes to react, NOAA Weather Radio gives you confidence to take the appropriate action when severe weather or other hazards are at hand."

NOAA Weather Radio receivers are sold at many electronic stores and discount stores, through catalogs and over the Internet. Receivers come in many sizes and with a variety of functions and costs. Pocket radios can be used for outdoor activities or carried on family trips.



## ...Co-op News...

Length of service awards...were presented to our coop observers during the late summer and early fall. Individual awards...**Fourteen years of service** in the coop program...**Mr. Glen Amburn of Tulia, Texas** and **Mr. Charles Sarchet of Silvertown, Texas**.

For **twenty-five years of service** in the coop program...**Mr. J. K. Adams of Muleshoe, Texas**. Institutional awards...For **twenty-five years of service** in the coop program...**Radio Station KDHN in Dimmitt, Texas**. For **seventy-five years of service in the coop program**...**The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, 9 miles north of Lubbock**.

### Other Notes...

The station at Lockettville Texas was closed during the late summer. This was done out of necessity due to the untimely death of the observer earlier in the year. We were unable to find a replacement within the six month time limit and the equipment was removed. Also the station at Muleshoe #1 has been made inactive while we search for a new observer. Another station that has gone on the inactive list is Old 8 Camp on the 6666's Ranch. The ranch is in the process of selling off some of their property, including the ranch house where our equipment was located. With no one at the site the unprotected equipment had to be removed.

We are considering adding an evening product to our duties at the Lubbock Weather Forecast Office. We are needing a few of our observers that would be willing to call in each evening at around 530 pm with a maximum for that day and any precipitation that may have fallen since their morning report. This data will be used to inform the local news media of area highs, lows and precipitation for their evening news broadcast. If any of you out there might be interested in helping us, please contact Johnny Wallace on our 1-800 number. With the end of another year approaching fast, the DAPM/HMT/INTERN staff is coming close to visiting all of our stations at least once this past year. All of our observers continue to be a pleasure to work with and they remain enthusiastic about their duties.

## Larry Vannozi Leaves Lubbock

In August, Larry left to assume the Regional Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) position at Southern Region Headquarters in Fort Worth. He was our WCM since 1993. In his new position, he will oversee the hazardous weather warning, preparedness, and coordination programs for the entire region, which includes 31 Weather Forecast Offices. Larry is missed but maybe he'll visit us now and then!

Ed Calianese has replaced Larry as our WCM. He was a Lead Forecaster in the Lubbock office for about three years prior to this selection. Before moving to Lubbock, Ed worked as a Journeyman Forecaster for four years in the NWS's Fort Worth office. He has been involved in community preparedness activities virtually his entire career with the NWS, which started in the early 1990's. His main weather interests are severe weather and radar meteorology, which is why he moved from his home in upstate New York to the Southern Plains as soon as he could!



## Winter Safety Tips



Our area is struck by several winter storms each winter. Winter storms are considered deceptive killers because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. People die in traffic accidents, from heart attacks while shoveling snow, and from hypothermia from prolonged exposure to the cold. Everyone is potentially at risk during winter storms. The actual threat depends on your specific situation. Most of the deaths that are related to ice and snow occur in automobiles and many others occur because people are caught out in the storm. About half of the people that die as a result of prolonged exposure to the cold are over 60 years of age and about one quarter of those victims are at home. Staying informed of developing winter weather events and being one step ahead of these storms is the key to avoiding winter weather related complications.

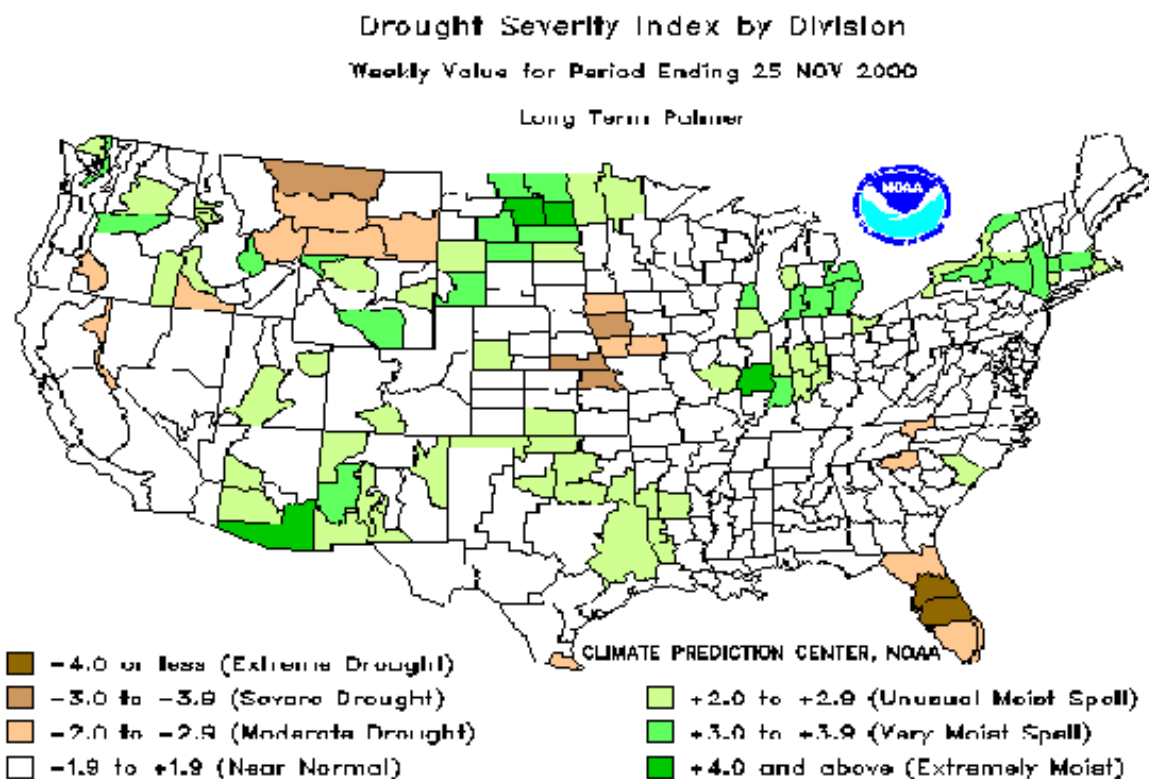
Here are a few tips that will help keep you and your family safe this winter season:

**At home or at work** - the primary concerns are the potential loss of heat, power, telephone service, and a shortage of supplies if storm conditions are prolonged. Keeping extra food, water and batteries on hand and having an emergency heat source available will enable you to withstand most winter weather situations. Plan for your pets, as they are just as susceptible to the cold as you are!

**For your vehicle** - fully check and winterize your vehicle before the winter season begins. A few items that you will find handy if you become stranded in a winter storm include: a flash light, extra batteries, blankets, bottled water, non-perishable food items, a tool kit, first-aid supplies, and a cellular phone.

Finally, **keep track of the latest weather reports**, especially when traveling a way from home and dress for the weather by wearing several layers of loose-fitting clothing rather than a single overcoat.

The National Weather Service or the American Red Cross can provide a brochure to assist you in preparing for winter weather hazards.



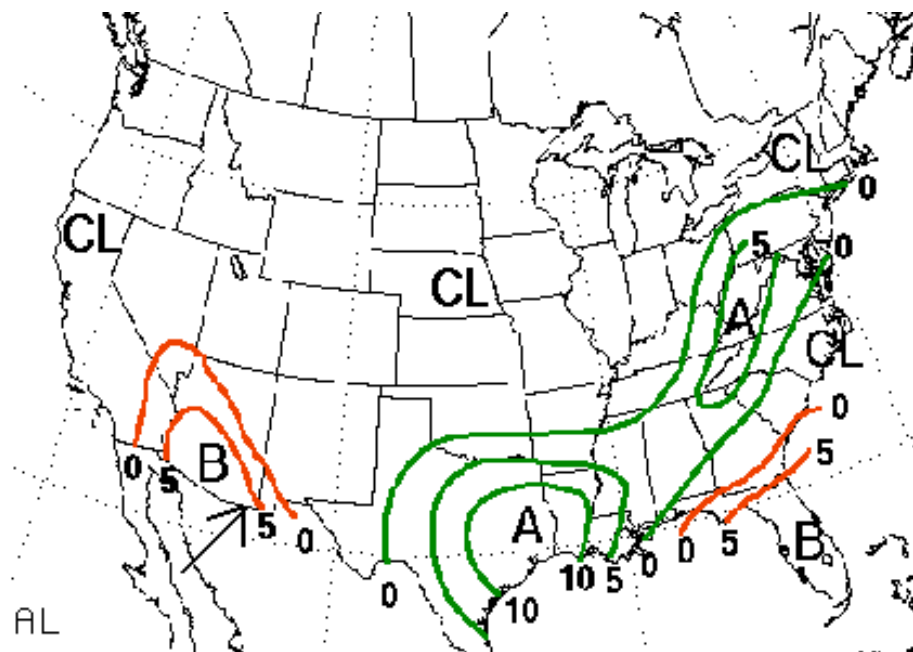


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In This Issue...

A "Normal" Winter??, NWS Winter Weather Products, StormReady program, and more...



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Outlook for Precipitation for December, January, and February from the Climate Prediction Center. Above average rainfall is forecast just to our east with near normal amounts across the South Plains, and drier than normal weather over Florida and parts of the Desert Southwest.