

# SAN DIEGO NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE

## *Watch, Warning, & Advisory Criteria Quick Reference*

### WIND

LOCATION	WIND ADVISORY	HIGH WIND WARNING	BLOWING DUST ADVISORY	DUST STORM WARNING
Coastal Areas and Valleys	Sustained 30 mph or more and/or gusts 35 mph or more	Sustained 40 mph or more and/or gusts 58 mph or more	Visibilities from 1/4 to 1 mile in blowing dust	Visibilities < 1/4 mile in blowing dust
Desert and Mountains below 7000 ft	Sustained 35 mph or more and/or gusts 45 mph or more	Sustained 45 mph or more and/or gusts 58 mph or more	Visibilities from 1/4 to 1 mile in blowing dust	Visibilities < 1/4 mile in blowing dust
Mountains above 7000 ft	Sustained 45 mph or more and/or gusts 55 mph or more	Sustained 55 mph or more and/or gusts 75 mph or more	Visibilities from 1/4 to 1 mile in blowing dust	Visibilities < 1/4 mile in blowing dust

### FOG

LOCATION	DENSE FOG ADVISORY
Usually for 2 or more locations	Less than or equal to 1/4 mile visibility for any length of time

### FIRE WEATHER

FIRE WEATHER WATCH	RED FLAG WARNING
When Red Flag Warning conditions are expected in the next 24 to 72 hours	Sustained winds > 25 mph (gusts > 35 mph) and RH < 15% for 6 hours or more OR dry lightning with more than isolated coverage

## WINTER WEATHER

LOCATION	WINTER STORM WATCH	WINTER STORM WARNING	WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY
Mountains above 7000 ft	When winter storm conditions are expected in the next 12-36 hours	When the following is occurring or expected in the next 12 hours: 12" of snow in 12 hours or 18" in 24 hours accompanied by other weather phenomena (such as winds)	Significant winter weather events are expected to begin within the next 12 hours but are not expected to meet warning criteria
Mountains below 7000 ft	When winter storm conditions are expected in the next 12-36 hours	When the following is occurring or expected in the next 12 hours: 8" of snow in 12 hours or 12" in 24 hours accompanied by other weather phenomena (such as winds)	Significant winter weather events are expected to begin within the next 12 hours but are not expected to meet warning criteria
All Other Locations	When winter storm conditions are expected in the next 12-36 hours	When the following is occurring or expected in the next 12 hours: 4" of snow in 12 hours or 6" in 24 hours accompanied by other weather phenomena (such as winds)	Significant winter weather events are expected to begin within the next 12 hours but are not expected to meet warning criteria

WIND CHILL WARNING	WIND CHILL ADVISORY	BLIZZARD WARNING	FREEZING RAIN OR DRIZZLE ADVISORY	ICE STORM WARNING
-20°F wind chill	-10 to -19°F wind chill	Combination of sustained wind 35 mph or more with visibility 1/4 mile or less for 3 hours or more	Freezing rain or drizzle accumulations of a trace to less than 1/4"	Freezing rain or drizzle accumulations of 1/4" or more

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## SEVERE THUNDERSTORM / TORNADO

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING	TORNADO WARNING
Hail 1" or larger and/or sustained winds or wind gusts 58 mph or greater	If tornado is sighted or if radar or other data suggest existence or formation is likely

# TEMPERATURE

LOCATION	EXCESSIVE HEAT WARNING	FROST ADVISORY	FREEZE WARNING
Coastal Sections	Day: Heat Index $\geq 105^{\circ}\text{F}$ Night: $\geq 75^{\circ}\text{F}$	Widespread temps from 28 to 32°F	Widespread temps 28°F or less
Valleys	Day: Heat Index $\geq 110^{\circ}\text{F}$ Night: $\geq 80^{\circ}\text{F}$	Widespread temps from 28 to 32°F	Widespread temps 28°F or less
High Deserts	Day: Heat Index $\geq 115^{\circ}\text{F}$ Night: $\geq 90^{\circ}\text{F}$	The 1st and 2nd time temp is forecast to be 32°F or less for 2 or more consecutive hours OR anytime between 1 Mar and 15 Nov	The 1st and 2nd time temp is forecast to be 28°F or less for 2 or more consecutive hours OR anytime between 1 Mar and 15 Nov
Lower Deserts	Day: Heat Index $\geq 115^{\circ}\text{F}$ Night: $\geq 90^{\circ}\text{F}$	Widespread temps from 28 to 32°F	Widespread temps 28°F or less
Mountains (above 3000 ft)	Day: Heat Index $\geq 105^{\circ}\text{F}$ Night: $\geq 75^{\circ}\text{F}$	Not Issued	Not Issued

# FLOOD

FLASH FLOOD WATCH	FLASH FLOOD WARNING
When there is a possibility of flash flooding within 6 to 48 hours, or there is concern about the safety of a dam, but a break is not imminent	Flash flooding is imminent or occurring, or a dam break is imminent or occurring

FLOOD WATCH	FLOOD WARNING	URBAN AND SMALL STREAM FLOOD ADVISORY
When there is a possibility of flooding within 6-48 hours	Flood even lasting several days or weeks	Minor flooding

# MARINE

SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY	GALE WARNING	STORM WARNING	SPECIAL MARINE WARNING
Wind 21 to 33 knots and/or combined seas 10 feet or more	Wind 34 to 47 knots	Wind 48 knots or more	Severe or widespread thunderstorm activity, including waterspouts and short duration winds or frequent gusts greater than 33 knots and/or cold air funnels

COASTAL FLOOD WATCH	COASTAL FLOOD WARNING
When coastal flooding is expected in the next 12 to 36 hours	A storm surge of 10 feet resulting from a combination of: 1) high tides (6 ft or more) and strong onshore winds, or 2) high tides (6 ft or more) and high surf (12 ft or more)

HIGH SURF ADVISORY	TIDAL OVERFLOW STATEMENT
Widespread breakers of 7 ft or more. If high tides will be 5 1/2 ft or more, a call to action to protect beach property is required	Tides of 7 ft or more with little or no wave or wind action. With higher wave or wind action, use Coastal Flooding products

# TSUNAMI

LOCATION	TSUNAMI WATCH/WARNING
San Diego County (code 73), Orange County (code 59), Inner Coastal Waters	The Alaska Tsunami Warning Center issues a Tsunami Watch/Warning (TSUWCA) for the Southern California coast