

Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Albany NY  
800 AM EDT Fri Nov 1 2024

...Winter Weather Awareness Week Continues...

October 27 to November 2 is winter weather awareness week in New York and New England.

The following are criteria the National Weather Service uses for issuing winter watches, warnings and advisories.

Hazardous weather outlooks are issued to give you a heads up for the possibility of severe winter conditions out to 7 days.

Winter storm watches alert the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain and or heavy sleet. Winter storm watches are usually issued 24 to 60 hours before the beginning of a winter storm.

A high wind watch is issued when sustained wind speeds of 40 mph or greater lasting for one hour or longer or for wind gusts of 58 mph or greater and/or widespread damage are possible.

Winter storm warnings are issued when hazardous weather is imminent or has already begun. They are issued for conditions which pose a threat to life and property. The following are the warning headlines issued for winter weather events.

A winter storm warning is issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, or a combination of heavy snow, freezing rain, and or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter storm warnings are usually issued 12 to 36 hours before the event is expected to begin.

Snow Squall Warnings can be issued for high-impact, localized, convective snow squalls that impact traffic on major roads such as interstates. These are usually issued for an hour or two based on weather radar signatures. The issuance of a warning will have interstate exit information. Special weather statements can be issued for snow squalls which will have less impact on travel.

An ice storm warning is issued when a heavy accumulation of one half inch or more of freezing rain (glaze) is forecast.

A blizzard warning is issued for sustained or gusty winds of 35 mph or more with falling or blowing snow creating visibilities at or below one quarter mile. These conditions are forecast to persist for at least 3 hours.

A high wind warning is issued when sustained wind speeds of 40 mph or greater lasting for one hour or longer or for wind gusts of 58 mph or greater and/or widespread damage are expected.

An extreme cold warning is issued when temperatures or wind chill temperatures are expected to be hazardous to life within only minutes of exposure to the cold.

Winter weather advisories are issued for less serious weather conditions. Specific advisories will alert you to weather that would have a significant effect on driving conditions, outdoor activities, or public events. The following are the advisory headlines issued for winter weather events.

Winter weather advisories are issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle and or sleet which will cause inconveniences, but if sufficient caution is exercised, do not usually threaten life and property.

A wind advisory is issued when sustained wind speeds of 31 to 39 mph lasting for one hour or longer are forecast or when wind gusts of 46 to 57 mph for any duration are expected.

A cold advisory is issued when temperatures or wind chill temperatures are expected to be a hazard to life with prolonged exposure if caution is not exercised.

The National Weather Service follows up watches, warnings and advisories with frequent updates and statements.

NOAA weather radio offers one way to receive immediate relay of any winter weather warnings. Many local television and radio stations also broadcast weather alerts. The Red Cross, FEMA, state and local emergency management agencies and TV stations have wireless applications that will alert you of threatening weather by relaying National Weather Service warnings.

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NWS Albany