



The Dryline

Winter's Coming... Are You Ready?

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain. Regardless of the severity of a winter storm, you should be prepared in order to remain safe during these events.

Common winter weather products issued by the NWS:

Winter Storm Outlook - Winter storm conditions are possible in the next 2 to 5 days.

Winter Weather Advisory - Winter weather conditions are expected to cause inconveniences and may be hazardous. When caution is used, these situations should not be life threatening.

Winter Storm Watch - Winter storm conditions are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. People in a watch area should review their winter storm plans and stay informed about weather conditions.

Winter Storm Warning - Life-threatening, severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. People in a warning area should take precautions immediately.

Prepare for a Winter Storm

- Winterize your vehicle and keep the gas tank full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Insulate your home by installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic from the inside to keep cold air out.
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.

If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55° F.

...More winter weather tips on page 3...

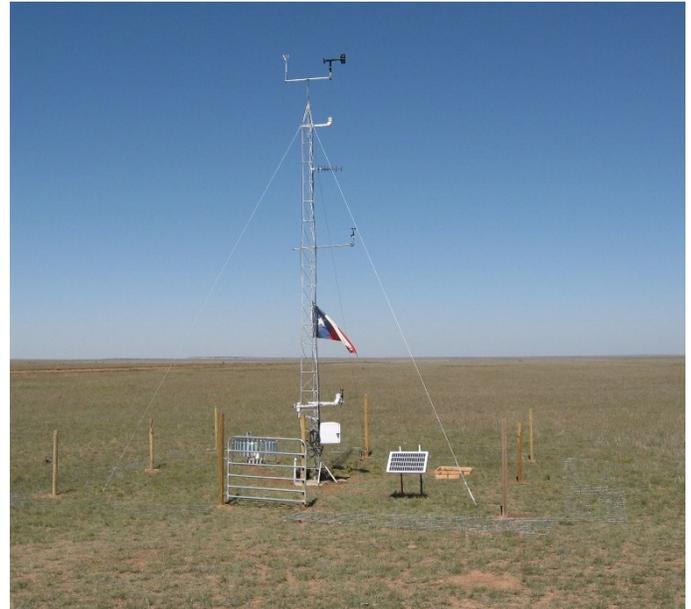
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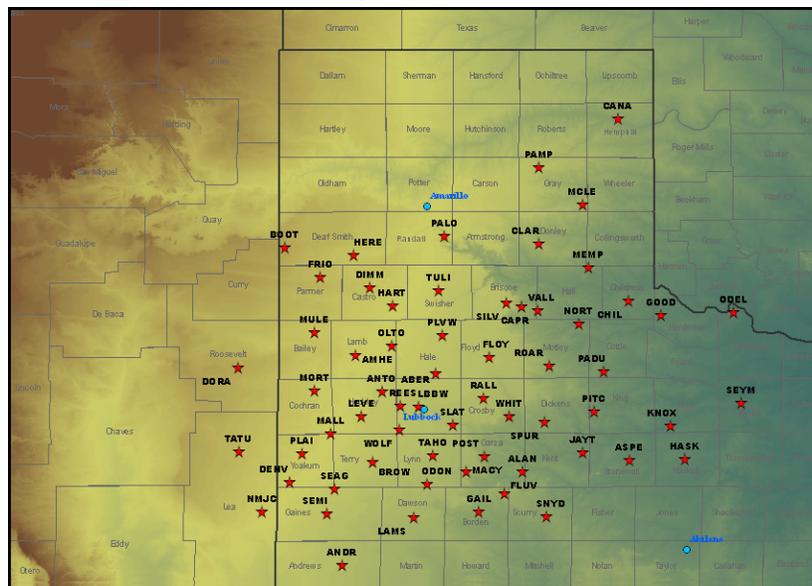


New Mesonet Stations near Palo Duro Canyon & in Deaf Smith County

Two new weather stations have been installed by the Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet. One is near the main entrance to Palo Duro Canyon State Park, 11 miles east of Canyon, TX. The other is 11 miles west-northwest of Bootleg, TX (very close to the New Mexico State line). These weather stations, also known as mesonet stations, will provide up to the minute meteorological data such as temperature, wind, precipitation, and other pertinent weather data. Data from these sites are invaluable to forecasters in daily and severe weather operations. The West Texas Mesonet also has 67 other weather stations in 48 counties across West Texas and Eastern New Mexico. Below are pictures of the mesonet stations after their completion. (Palo Duro Canyon is on the left & Bootleg is on the right)



The stations stand at over 30 feet tall and are located away from the city, trees, hills, and other features that could interfere with the meteorological instruments. More information and weather data from these site and others can be found at the West Texas Mesonet website at www.mesonet.ttu.edu. Below is a map of most of the mesonet stations that the West Texas Mesonet is currently operating and maintaining.



Winter's Coming... Are You Ready?

Put Together a Supply Kit

- Water—at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc.)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Sand, rock salt or non-clumping kitty litter to make walkways and steps less slippery
- Warm coats, gloves or mittens, hats, boots, and extra blankets and warm clothing for all household members

NWS Amarillo is now on Twitter!

Follow us on Twitter as another way to stay connected with the weather around the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles! You can follow us by clicking the link below, also feel free to pass along our tweets to your friends and family to keep them up to date with the weather!



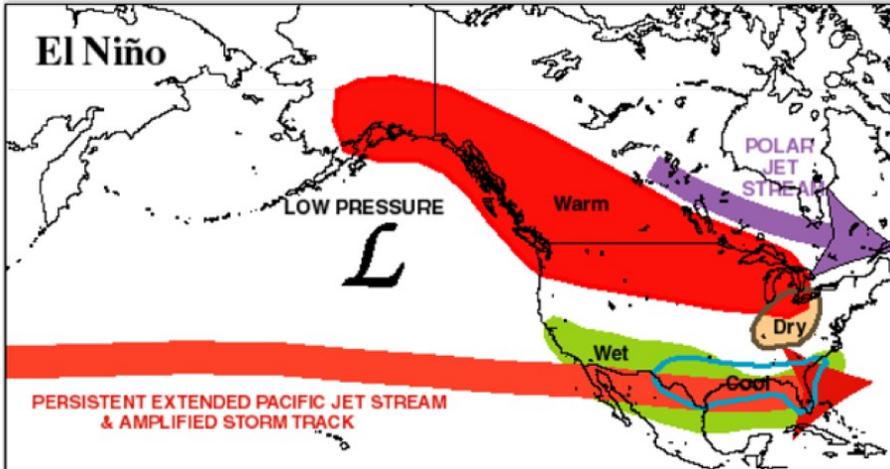
twitter.com/nwsamarillo



El Niño Finally Returning?

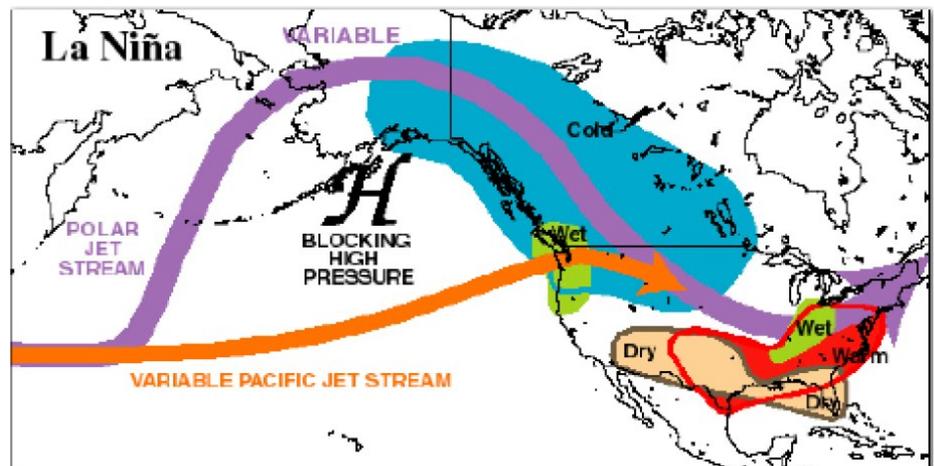
By Andrew Moulton, Meteorological Intern

You may have heard that the tropical Pacific Ocean is starting to return to a state of El Niño this fall and winter and is expected to continue early next year. But what do water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean have to do with weather in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles? The answer has to do primarily with the jet stream.



El Niño conditions can lead to more precipitation for our area through the winter into the spring.

La Niña conditions, which we've been experiencing since 2010, was one of the causes for the lack of precipitation in the Texas & Oklahoma Panhandles.



During El Niño, water temperatures in the eastern Pacific Ocean near the equator become warmer than usual. This tends to strengthen the southern jet stream across the eastern Pacific Ocean, leading to more rainfall in the southwestern United States. The impacts are generally less dramatic farther east, but the Panhandles are also affected. El Niño often means more storm systems and more precipitation for our area. Because a large portion of the total precipitation in the winter season in Amarillo falls as snow, El Niño often leads to greater snowfall as well. The increase in storm systems also leads to slightly cooler daytime temperatures during El Niño. Impacts from El Niño and its counterpart, La Niña, are typically greatest in the winter months. This is due to the natural southward progression of the jet stream during winter, placing it closer to the tropical region in which El Niño or La Niña forms.

The current forecast issued by the Climate Prediction Center calls for weak El Niño conditions late this fall, and for them to last through the winter. This could lead to a slightly wetter and snowier winter for the Panhandles compared to last year. It is important to remember, however, that many other factors contribute to the weather in an area and that the presence of El Niño does not guarantee a wet or snowy winter. More information on El Niño, La Niña and their impact on the weather in the Panhandles is available on our website at www.srh.noaa.gov/ama/?n=elnino

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The Veteran's Administration (VA) in Amarillo threw a chili cook-off on October 5th to raise money for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Electronics Technician Dave Wilburn entered the contest and won an award for his chili for the 5th year in a row making his *extremely* spicy, traditional tomato based chili. To get his chili so hot, Dave puts several different types of hot peppers into his chili, including the ghost pepper, which is the hottest pepper on earth, according to the Guinness Book of World Records. The Chili cook-off raised over \$900 for the CFC this year.