



# NWS Winter Weather Products

The National Weather Service follows a three-tiered approach for issuing winter products; Outlook, Watch, and Advisory or Warning. The criteria for an Advisory or Warning is different across parts of Missouri. Consult with your local NWS office for the exact criteria for your area.

**Outlook Phase-** The **Hazardous Weather Outlook (HWO)** is a text product that will contain information pertaining to potential winter storms that may occur in the latter days of the forecast, typically for periods beyond 48 hours. The **Situation Report**, is a graphical version of the HWO and is available on our home webpage. <http://weather.gov/stlouis>

**Winter Storm Watch** - A watch is used when the risk of hazardous winter weather has increased significantly, there is a strong possibility it will reach warning criteria, and falls in the 12 to 48 hour portion of the forecast.

**Warning** – The following warnings are issued when an event is occurring, is imminent, or has a high probability of occurrence. Warnings are issued for events that can be life threatening. The following warnings can be issued

**Blizzard Warning:** Sustained wind or frequent gusts greater than or equal to 35 mph accompanied by falling and/or blowing snow, frequently reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile for three hours or more

**Ice Storm Warning:** Freezing rain producing ice accumulations of 1/4 inch or more

**Winter Storm Warning:** Issued for snow events of 6 inches or more, sleet accumulations of 1/2 inch or more, or a combination of winter precipitation which will produce life threatening conditions. For parts of Southern Missouri, the snowfall criteria is 4 inches or more. Consult with your local NWS office.

**Wind Chill Warning:** Wind chill values of minus 25 degrees F or colder.

**Advisory:** The following advisories will be issued when an event is occurring, is imminent, or has a high probability of occurrence. These are issued for lesser events that while presenting an inconvenience, do not pose an immediate threat of death, injury, or significant property damage.

**Winter Weather Advisory:** Depending on the time of occurrence and the temperature, an advisory can be issued for snowfall of 1 to 5 inches, for sleet accumulations of less than 1/2 inch, or if a combination of winter precipitation will produce hazardous conditions.

**Freezing Rain Advisory:** Light freezing rain producing ice accumulations less than 1/4 inch.

**Wind Chill Advisory:** Wind chill values of minus 15 to minus 24 degrees F.