

Crazy Spring Weather is the Norm Are you Weather Ready?

NOAA and the National Weather Service define spring as the months of March, April and May. Spring in eastern New York and western New England, like fall, is a transition season. March often begins as a winter month with snow and ice, with summer-like conditions and severe weather expected by the end of May. April often has very dry and windy periods and is the heart of the local fire weather season. The following is a list of notable spring storms with some links for reference. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list, but a list to give an idea of what weather conditions to be prepared for in the spring so you can be spring weather ready.

Blizzards:

The Blizzard of 1888 (March 11-14, 1888)

The blizzard by which all others are measured. Light snow began around 3 PM on Sunday the 11th, accumulating to near 3 inches by midnight. The snow intensified overnight and there was 18 inches on the ground by daybreak on Monday the 12th. Moderate to heavy snow continued throughout the day accumulating to 33 inches by midnight. Snow continued on and off through Tuesday the 13th, adding roughly another foot, until finally ending around 3 AM on the 14th. Total snowfall for the storm was 46.7 inches, but the drifts were significantly higher. This storm still holds the [record snowfall for a storm for Albany](#), NY.

March 13-14, 1993 "Superstorm"

It was called a superstorm because it affected the entire eastern third of the U.S. There was a major severe weather event in the southeast, flooding and snow in the Mid-Atlantic States and blizzard conditions in the northeast. An intense area of low pressure moved out of the Gulf of Mexico and northward along the east coast, dropping the pressure to record levels at many locations along the eastern seaboard. The storm dumped 26.6 inches at Albany, the [2nd greatest March snowstorm record](#) and the [2nd greatest snowstorm on record](#), while other parts of the Albany Forecast Area received as much as 40 inches. Winds were strong enough to cause isolated structural damage and scattered power outages and significant drifting of snow.

Blizzard of March 14, 2017

A very significant nor'easter impacted the region, featuring extremely heavy snowfall and blizzard conditions. There was widespread public impact, with many roads closed amid travel bans. Many schools closed for two days. The bulk of the snowstorm occurred during the day on Tuesday, March 14th. This snowstorm was regarded as the largest snowstorm to impact upstate New York since the Valentine's Day 2007 Snowstorm/Blizzard. Most areas saw 15-25 inches, with the southern Adirondacks and western Mohawk Valley picking up an amazing 30-42 inches of snowfall. During the storm, a wind gust of 74 MPH was measured near Florida, Massachusetts.

Notable Winter Storms in April:

April 3-5, 2003 Ice, Snow and Sleet Storm

The storm mainly impacted areas north of a line from Schoharie County, NY east to northern Berkshire County, MA. 12-18" of snow fell across the southern Adirondacks, Lake George and Glens Falls areas east to northern Bennington and Windham Counties in Vermont. South of that, a mixture of snow, sleet and freezing rain fell. Ice accumulations of ½" to 1" were reported on the third and fourth. All areas saw precipitation change to and end as snow on the fifth. The weight of ice and snow caused many downed trees and limbs and power outages. The storm was followed by gusty winds and below freezing temperatures through April 6 which resulted in additional power outages. Power was not fully restored to all areas until Tuesday evening, April 8.

http://files.cbs6albany.com/wrgb/weather_historical_daily/2003/Apr3-5-2003_Ice_SnowStorm.htm

April 6, 1982 Snowstorm

Shutting down highways, offices and schools this weather event is considered the worst April snowstorm in local history. The April snowstorm was accompanied by heavy snowfall, high winds, blizzard conditions and most notably; extensive thunderstorm activity. Most areas saw one to two feet of snow. Albany received 17.7 inches of snow from this storm which stands as the [greatest snowstorm for April for Albany](#). Wind gusts of 40 MPH were recorded in Rensselaer, NY while gusts of 70 to 80 MPH were observed in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

<https://www.timesunion.com/weather/article/Memorable-snowstorms-in-Capital-Region-history-10606957.php#photo-12054626>

Notable Winter Storms in May:

May 10, 1945 Snowstorm

Many areas across the region saw snow accumulation. The 5.4 inches of snow recorded at Albany, made it the [largest May snowstorm to date](#). 60,000 power outages were reported across the Capital District of NY from downed trees and wires. Some locations were without power for a few days. [Largest number of power outages since ice storm of 1929](#). In the City of Albany alone, 10 DPW trucks were assigned to debris removal. Glens Falls reported 3 inches of snow. Locations in Western New England reported 3 to 8 inches of snow. In the hill towns, snowplows had to rescue stranded motorists.

May 18, 2002 Snowstorm

A low pressure system tracking east across the Tennessee Valley moved into the region early on the 18th. The colder air the storm brought in from the north turned rain into a wet heavy snow across much of Eastern New York in the morning hours. Many elevated locations saw significant snowfall, 8 inches was reported at Prattsville, Greene County while Summit in Schoharie County received 6.5 inches. In higher elevation regions snow caused tree limbs and wires to come down, and power outages were reported in the Catskills. The 2.2 inches that fell at Albany International Airport was officially the [latest measurable snowfall](#) ever recorded in the season and the [second greatest snowfall](#) for the entire month of May.

Notable Spring Floods:

March 13-15, 1977

An early warm spell with temperatures into the 70s and 80s, combined with a heavy snowpack, and 3 inches of rain produced a record flood on the Mohawk River at Little Falls and near record flood on Kaydeross in the Saratoga area. Ice jams caused flooding along many small creeks and along the Connecticut River in Windham County, VT. The Pontoosuc Dam in Pittsfield, MA was threatened by overtopping but held. Ramps to new Interstate 787 in downtown Albany were flooded, and the current in the Hudson River undermined the Green Island Bridge causing it to collapse into the river on March 15 around 2:30 PM with, miraculously, no fatalities or injuries.

<http://www.villageofgreenisland.com/uncategorized/40-years-ago-today/>

April 4-6, 1987

Snowmelt and large rainfall amounts on March 31st and April 4th-7th led to flooding from eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, northeast across eastern New York into much of New England. Damage from flooding was widespread in this area and led to numerous evacuations. 500 people were evacuated from their homes in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts. In New Milford, CT, the Housatonic River ravaged through town damaging many roads. In Vermont, Corp of Engineers reservoirs spilled for the first time in their history. On the morning of April 5, the New York State Thruway Bridge over the Schoharie Creek suddenly collapsed. At least 10 people died when their vehicles plunged into the flood swollen creek.

<https://pubs.usgs.gov/wri/1989/4084/report.pdf>

<https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/1987/0460/report.pdf>

Notable Spring Severe Weather Outbreaks:

May 31, 1998

The NWS Storm Prediction Center issued a High Risk for severe thunderstorms across northern Pennsylvania, most of New York, Western Massachusetts and Western Vermont. A High Risk had never before been issued for the Northeastern United States, and hasn't been issued since this event. This indicated an abnormally dangerous weather situation for this region of the country, a situation more common in the Plains States and Midwest. During the afternoon, several thunderstorms became tornadic over Saratoga, Albany, Rensselaer, and Washington Counties in New York, Bennington County, Vermont and Litchfield County, CT. A series of tornadoes occurred starting with an F3 tornado that moved across the Saratoga County Communities of Stillwater and Mechanicville. Straight line wind damage also occurred in most of NWS Albany's County Warning Area. Cloud to ground lightning rates over the region reached 15,000 strikes per hour and fires started by lightning were reported. These storms resulted in 68 injuries but no fatalities, tens of millions of dollars in damage to homes and

businesses, and extensive forest damage. Power was out to over 130,000 customers at the storm's peak, while 12,000 were without power for over three days.

<http://www.spc.noaa.gov/exper/outbreaks/outbreaks-regions.php#>

Notable Spring Fires:

Sullivan/Ulster County April 23-25, 2016

The wildfire at Sam's point reserve 21 miles west of Poughkeepsie burned about 2,028 acres of land. Nearly 300 first and emergency responders helped to contain the fire. The majority of the burned area occurred in the ridgetop dwarf pitch pine barrens, a fire adapted ecosystem. There was no damage to infrastructure and only minor injuries were reported resulting from the fire.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/42378.html>

Spring Heat Waves:

April 26-28, 1990

High temperatures during this period. Albany, NY: 90°F, 90°F, 92°F.

May 18-20, 1962

High temperatures during this period. Albany, NY: 94°F, 91°F, 91°F.

May 25-27, 1880

High temperatures during this period. Albany, NY: 90°F, 92°F, 90°F.

Late Freezes:

May 31, 1961

Temperatures of 24F in Indian Lake, NY and 30F in Glens Falls and Saratoga, NY were measured. Below freezing temperatures were seen across New England. Dorset, VT reached 25F and Vernon, VT dropped to 28F. 29F was recorded in Pittsfield, MA. Falls Village and Norfolk, CT fell to 30F. Millbrook in Dutchess County, NY also reached 30F. Albany airport measured a record setting 34F, a chilly [temperature for late spring](#). This late freeze damaged crops and caused extensive agricultural impacts throughout New England. It is considered one of the most damaging freezes recorded so late in the season.

Weather

Bull. cont.
Today's Temperature
High 49 Low 33
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THE KNICKERBOCKER NEWS FINAL

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Albany, N. Y., Friday, May 11, 1945

Price Four Cents

5-Inch Snow Cripples Electric and Phone Lines

Last vestiges of a history-making May snowfall had disappeared from Albany streets by noon today but throughout the city repairmen continued their jobs of clearing debris and restoring communication service.

Disrupted light and telephone service was caused by tree limbs, broken by the weight of the heavy snow, falling across the wires, officials of the utilities said today. Wind in the Capital District was not sufficient to tear down the wires.

In the Helderbergs, four plows of the county highway department were still showing their way through drifts to aid a number of stranded motorists, some in Knox, Berne and Westerlo.

The storm, which originated in Minnesota and passed over eastern New York, only to belt the New England states with greater fury, laid 5.4 inches of snow in Albany. By noon, a 45-degree temperature had dispersed most of it and higher temperatures were expected tonight.

Tomorrow, the Albany Weather Bureau said, will be cloudy and warmer, with prospects of more rain.

Snow definitely is out of the

In the NEWS Today



Franklin Mark, 1, of Wichita, Kan., doesn't like his visit to Children's Hospital in Chicago where a rivet was removed from his lung May 4. (AP Wire-

Once in 100 Years

Yesterday's snow storm, which laid a blanket of 5.4 inches in Albany and vicinity, established a record in the history of the Albany Weather Bureau.

Ernest J. Christie, meteorologist, said "traces" have fallen on a dozen occasions but the only previous May 10 in history when snow could be measured was in 1907, when a half inch fell.

"The odds are that we won't have another storm like yesterday's for 100 years," Mr. Christie said. "We never had one before in this section and a study of weather bureau records shows that freak disturbances of that type are few and far between."

picture for the weekend, observers said.

Damage to early vegetable crops was negligible, according to Walter S. Mason, Albany County Farm Bureau agent. If temperatures drop to the freezing point tonight, he added, the effect in produce will be serious.

New York Power & Light officials said the storm disrupted service to 60,000 customers in its territory but that most of the service had been restored by 7 a. m. today.

Fort Plain reported five inches of snow; Elmira, four inches; Wyoming County, four inches; Glens Falls, three inches; Chautauque County, three inches. In New England, three to eight inches fell in some sections.

At 9:15 a. m. today, it was still snowing in Montpelier, Vt., Concord and Manchester, N. H. (Other details and picture on

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Falling Trees Wreak Havoc Among Wires

Electric service throughout the Capital District was seriously affected by the unprecedented snowstorm that swept over the northeast yesterday.

Working in a brilliant sun and higher temperatures, 600 linemen of the New York Power and Light Corporation still labored today to restore the balance of 60,000 service disruptions in the territory.

In Saratoga and Ballston Spa it was a question this afternoon if street lights would be back in operation by nightfall.

By noon today all but 4,000 of the service breaks had been repaired.

Saratoga Springs and Ballston Spa were heavily hit. Of the 7,000 electricity customers in the Saratoga district, 2,000 were without service during the night and Albany officials said it was doubtful if all service could be restored by nightfall. About 500, it was estimated, will be without lights until tomorrow morning.

Four of Saratoga's six street light circuits were broken last night, throwing two-thirds of the city's streets in darkness. One side of Broadway, however, remained lighted.

Most Breaks Repaired

Joseph Terriault, New York Power and Light manager at Saratoga, said the storm's effect was the most serious since the famous sleet storm of 1929.

Power and light officials said the service disruptions were caused entirely by trees and branches, broken by the weight of snow, falling across conductors and lines. The majority of the breaks occurred on the lines extending from poles into homes.

Albany Service Restored

At 7 a. m. practically all service in Albany had been restored but 1,000 consumers still were without power in Schenectady, 2,000 in the Cobleskill region, 200 at Greenwich, 600 in Glens Falls and 500 in Canajoharie.

The New York Telephone Company reported several hundred phones were put out of operation but most of the service had been restored by noon today.

Tree branches falling into the streets caused a serious traffic impediment in Albany yesterday afternoon and last night. The Police Department received about 50 calls from householders and the Department of Public Works assigned 10 of its trucks and drivers to assist the Park Department in removing the debris.