



Heavy Rainfall and Isolated Strong to Severe Storms Wednesday and Thursday Across South-Central and Eastern AZ

KEY POINTS

- Significant weather system affecting the region will bring multiple rounds of showers and storms across much of south-central and eastern AZ Wednesday and Thursday.
- Moderate to heavy rainfall with rainfall rates in excess of 1-2 inches per hour are likely with storms, leading to flooding impacts.
- There is a potential for some storms to become severe with damaging wind gusts, large hail, and even a small chance of an isolated tornado all possible.
- Much quieter weather returns by the end of the week.
- Near to slightly above normal temperatures, resulting in Minor HeatRisk, are expected through the middle of the week. Below normal temperatures expected by the end of week.

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS BRIEFING

- Added major risk of heavy rain across the AZ high terrain Wednesday-Thursday
- Flood Watch issued for all of south-central and eastern AZ Wednesday-Thursday

WEATHER RISK OUTLOOK

Risk levels incorporate potential impacts from weather hazards and likelihood of occurrence for a reasonable worse case scenario.

	Tue 10/20	Wed 10/21	Thu 10/22	Fri 10/23	Sat 10/24	Sun 10/25	Mon 10/26
Phoenix Metro Including Maricopa and NW Pinal Counties	Heat	Heavy Rain Thunderstorms Heat	Heavy Rain Thunderstorms Heat			Heat	Heat
Higher Terrain SC AZ S. Gila County and Tonto NF Foothills in NE Maricopa County	Heat	Heavy Rain Thunderstorms	Heavy Rain Thunderstorms	AM Isolated Showers			
Southwest AZ Including La Paz and Yuma Counties	Heat	Heat Isolated showers	Heat Isolated showers	Heat	Heat	Heat	Heat
Southeast CA Including Imperial and Eastern Riverside Counties	Heat	Heat	Heat	Heat	Heat	Heat	Heat
Joshua Tree National Park	Heat	Heat Isolated showers	Isolated Showers				

Risk Levels

Little to None

Minor

Moderate

Major

Extreme

DETAILS

Phoenix Metro



Heavy Rain

Impacts:

Moderate to heavy rain leading to mostly minor nuisance flooding. Heavy rain leading to localized flash flooding will be possible.

Timing:

Wednesday-Thursday

Confidence:

Moderate

Details:

- **Flood Watch in effect from 8 pm MST Wednesday through 5 pm MST Thursday.**
- Marginal to slight risk (5-15% chance within 25 miles of a point) of flooding Wednesday and Thursday.
- Several rounds of showers and thunderstorms will be possible Wednesday and Thursday with the highest rainfall amounts focused across northern and eastern Maricopa County.



Thunderstorms

Impacts:

Thunderstorms may produce strong wind gusts, lightning, and hail.

Timing:

Wednesday-Thursday

Confidence:

Moderate

Details:

- Daily chances for thunderstorms of 20-40% with the best chance of strong winds and large hail occurring during the afternoon and early evening, especially Wednesday. There is also a less than 5% chance of an isolated tornado.



Heat

Impacts:

Low Risk for heat-related illnesses for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Timing:

Minor Risk through Thursday and again starting next Sunday

Confidence:

High

Details:

- Highs in the upper 80s to around 90 degrees today, cooling into the upper mid to upper 70s by the end of the week.
- Highs rebound back in the 80s by next Sunday.

Higher Terrain SC AZ



Heavy Rain

Impacts:

Heavy rain could lead to flash flooding. Heavy rain on wildfire burn scars have a high risk of flash flooding along with mud and debris flows.

Timing:

Wednesday-Thursday

Confidence:

Moderate

Details:

- **Flood Watch in effect from 11 am MST Wednesday through 11 pm MST Thursday.**
- Slight risk (15-25% chance within 25 miles of a point) of flooding
- Several rounds of showers and thunderstorms will be possible Wednesday and Thursday.



Thunderstorms

Impacts:

Thunderstorms may produce strong wind gusts, lightning, and hail

Timing:

Wednesday-Thursday

Confidence:

Moderate

Details:

- 30-50% chance of thunderstorms with the best chance of strong winds and large hail occurring during the afternoon and early evening. There is also a less than 5% chance of an isolated tornado.



Heat

Impacts:

Low Risk for heat-related illnesses for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Timing:

Today

Confidence:

High

Details:

- Afternoon highs on Tuesday topping out in the low to mid 80s.

Southwest Arizona



Heat

Impacts:

Low Risk for heat-related illnesses for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Timing:

Daily

Confidence:

High

Details:

- Afternoon highs as warm as 85-90°F through Wednesday, cooling into the upper 70s to around 80°F Friday before rebounding into the low to mid 80s over the weekend.

Southeast California



Heat

Impacts:

Low Risk for heat-related illnesses for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Timing:

Daily, except Friday

Confidence:

High

Details:

- Afternoon highs as warm as 85-90°F through Wednesday, cooling into the upper 70s to around 80°F Friday before rebounding into the low to mid 80s over the weekend.

Joshua Tree National Park



Heat

Impacts:

Low Risk for heat-related illnesses for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Timing:

Through Wednesday

Confidence:

High

Details:

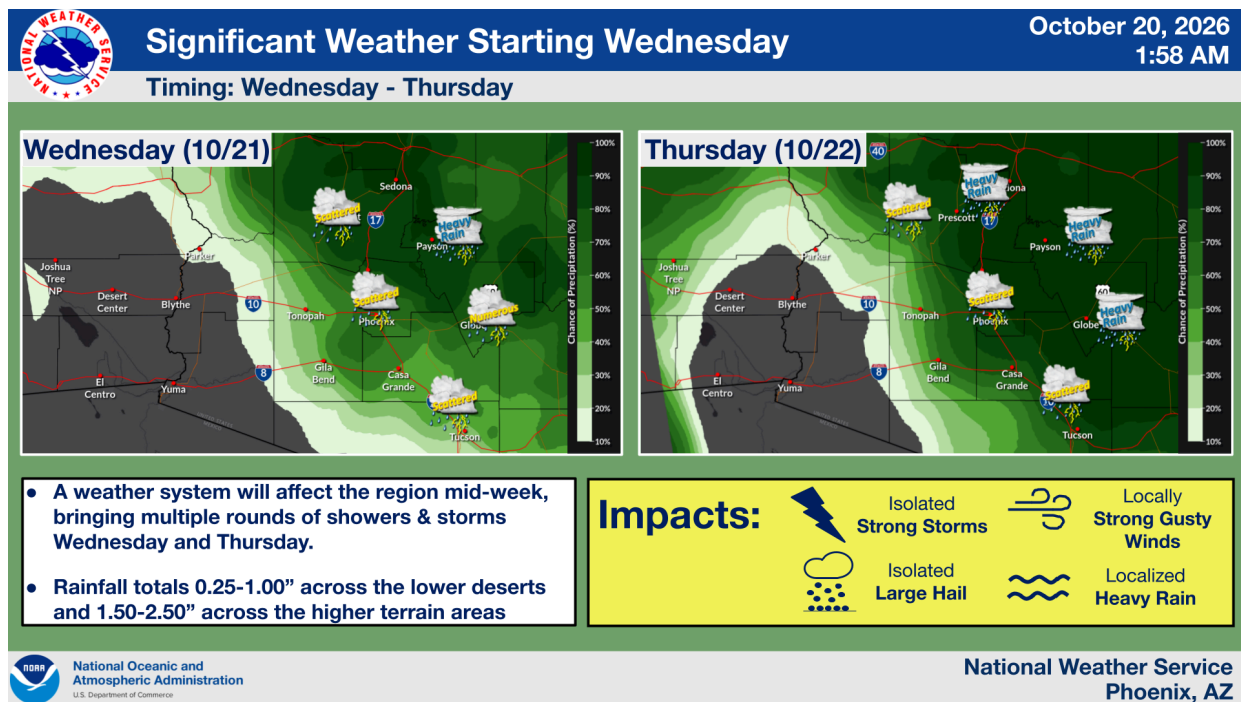
- Lower elevation highs in the low to mid 80s through Wednesday, before cooling into the 70s starting Thursday.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For the latest forecast updates, visit weather.gov/phoenix.

If you have questions or would like to submit weather reports, photos, or to unsubscribe from these briefings, email nws.phoenix@noaa.gov or call .

GRAPHICS



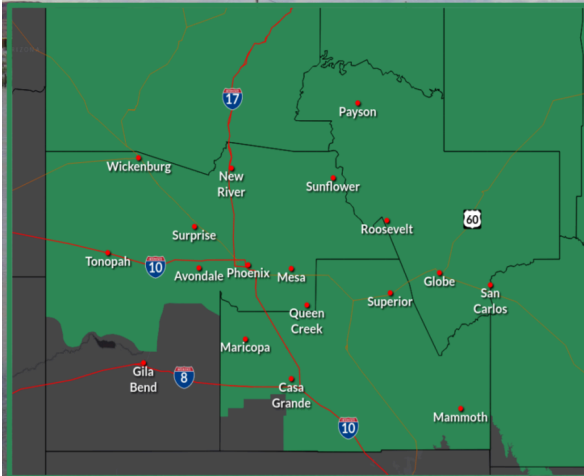
Rain Chances Wed-Th



Flood Watch

October 20, 2026
1:58 AM

Timing: Wednesday - Thursday



Never drive through
flooded roadways & low
water crossings



Have an evacuation
plan & an emergency
kit



Local ponding of
water on area
roadways



Excessive runoff along
rivers, creeks, streams,
and washes

Timing

- AZ High Terrain: Wednesday morning - Thursday evening
- SC AZ Lower Deserts: Wednesday evening - Thursday afternoon

Forecast

- AZ High Terrain: 1.50"-2.50", locally higher in t-storms
- SC AZ Lower Deserts: 0.25"-1.00", locally higher in t-storms



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Phoenix, AZ

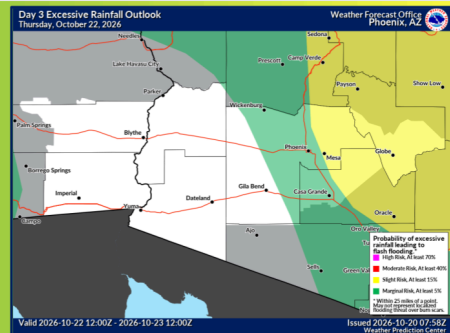
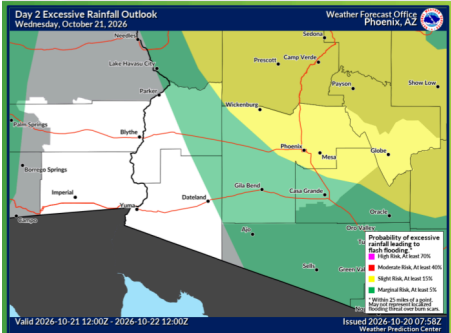
Flood Watch



Excessive Rainfall Outlook

October 20, 2026
1:58 AM

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 - Thursday, October 22, 2026



What to Expect

- Multiple rounds of showers and storms to develop over south-central AZ and the eastern AZ higher terrain throughout Wednesday and Thursday
- Storms will take advantage of ample of moisture (PWAT values of 1.3-1.6")
- Localized heavy downpours with rainfall rates up to 1-2"/hr
- Western lower deserts are expected to remain dry

Probability of excessive rainfall
leading to rapid onset flooding.

Marginal Risk
(At least 5%)

Slight Risk
(At least 15%)

Moderate Risk
(At least 40%)

High Risk
(At least 70%)

Impacts



Heavy rain leading
to flash flooding



Ponding, roadway
flooding, &
longer than normal commute



Flooding on small
creeks & normally
dry washes



Do not drive through flooded
roads & low water crossings



Wednesday morning
- Thursday night



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Phoenix, AZ

Excessive Rainfall Outlook

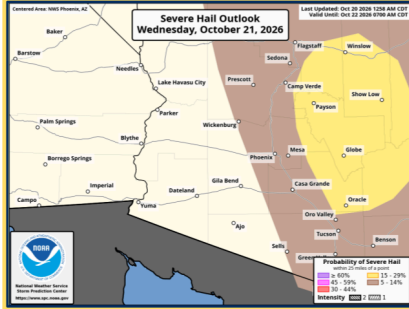


Severe Weather Outlook

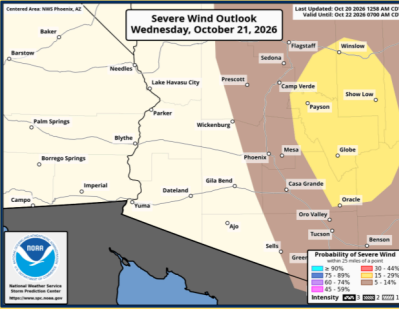
October 20, 2026
1:58 AM

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

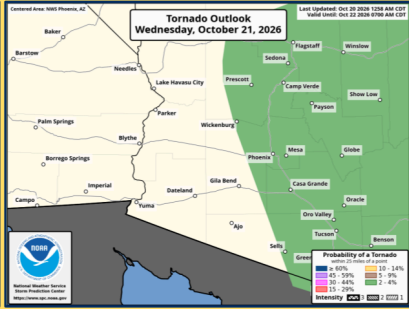
Severe Hail Outlook



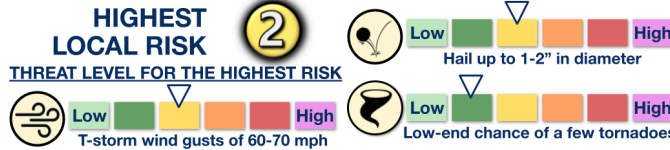
Severe Wind Outlook



Tornado Outlook



Threat Assessment



What to Expect

→ Scattered showers and thunderstorms will develop across the area starting **Wednesday morning**.

→ **Flooding** remains the **main threat** but **strong gusty winds** and **hail** will also pose a threat with the strongest storms. There is also a less than 5% chance of an **isolated tornado**.



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Phoenix, AZ

Severe Weather Outlook



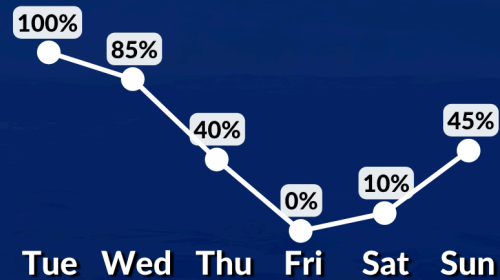
Temperature Outlook

October 20, 2026
1:58 AM

Temperatures cool through the remainder of the workweek

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Phoenix	93°	88°	83°	79°	80°	83°
Yuma	91°	90°	85°	81°	84°	85°
El Centro	91°	90°	84°	82°	84°	84°
Blythe	91°	90°	83°	80°	82°	83°
Globe	80°	78°	71°	69°	69°	70°
HeatRisk Levels	None 0		Minor 1			

Chance of Daily Highs 85°F or above in Phoenix



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Temperature Outlook