



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



December 2003

Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons Killed	Number of Persons Injured	Estimated Damage Property	Estimated Damage Crops	Character of Storm
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ089>092	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley				0	0			Dense Fog
	02	2300PST							
	03	0900PST							
	<p>Visibility lowered during the night of the 2nd due to dense fog from the Central San Joaquin Valley southward through the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Visibilities were reported as low as 100 feet by law enforcement before midnight in Merced County near Los Banos to 300 feet on the Kings-Kern County Line.</p>								
Tulare County 2 SW Visalia	05	1648PST			0	0			Lightning
CAZ096	S Sierra Mtns				0	0			Winter Storm
	06	1400PST							
	07	1700PST							
	<p>A weather system crossed Interior Central California late on the 6th through much of the 7th depositing significant snows on elevations above 6500 feet M.S.L.: Tuolumne Meadows reported 10" new snow with a water content of 1.09 inches. Approximate snow amounts reported were 18" at Horse Meadow and Agnew Pass; and 12" at Volcanic Knob and Paradise Meadow. Snow amounts dropped off quickly to the south such that the Tulare County Mountains had amounts of 6" or less. Foothill areas had from 1" to 2" rainfall over 24-hours from this event.</p>								
CAZ095	Kern Cty Mtns				0	0	5K		Landslide
	07	1110PST							
		1600PST							
	<p>A rock slide occurred in the Kern River Canyon after 0.20" of rain had fallen in a 4-hour period close by in the Kern County Mountains.</p>								
CAZ096	S Sierra Mtns				0	0			Winter Storm
	09	1914PST							
	10	0800PST							
	<p>Meso-net site at CFLO reported south wind gusts to 51 MPH at 2014 PST with a new snow accumulation of 12" at Tuolumne Meadows in a 12-hour period over the night of the 9th.</p>								
CAZ090>091-093>094-097	E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - S Sierra Foothills - Tulare Cty Foothills - Tulare Cty Mtns				0	0	19K		Strong Wind (MG35)
	09	2040PST							
	10	1500PST							
	<p>Gusty southeast wind associated with a rain band swept through northern Kings County and into central Fresno County during the mid-evening hours of the 9th. Minor roof damage occurred in Kings County around 2040 PST and 7 weakened power poles were downed in West Fresno along Highway 99 with the sharp gusts. Over 5000 local utility company customers were without power after 2100 hours on the 9th due to the wind damage. In the Southern Sierra Foothills and Tulare County Foothills some tree limbs were broken as speeds reached 45 knots and 30 knots, respectively. In the higher terrain of the Tulare County Mountains, a mesonet site had sustained wind of 29 knots with an isolated gust of 51 knots at 1121 PST on the 10th.</p>								
CAZ095>097	Kern Cty Mtns - S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns				0	0			Heavy Snow
	11	0000PST							
		1600PST							
	<p>A rather fast-moving frontal system deposited substantial amounts of snow at higher elevations of Interior Central California. Snowfall amounts included 10 inches at Tuolumne Meadows and Tamarack Summit in the South Sierra Nevada, 8" at Lodgepole in the Tulare County Mountains, and 4" at Lime Kiln Canyon in the Kern Mountains. Other storm precipitation totals ranged approximately from 4/5" at Mariposa in the S.Sierra Foothills, 1/2" at Merced, and 1/3" at Fresno on the Central San Joaquin Valley Floor.</p>								
CAZ095-098>099	Kern Cty Mtns - Indian Wells Vly - Se Kern Cty Desert				0	0	3K		Strong Wind (MG49)
	11	0813PST							
	12	0400PST							



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CALIFORNIA, South Central

Post-frontal conditions over the Kern County Mountains and Deserts supported gusty northwest wind. Speeds were generally 45 to 55 MPH in many locations with just a few isolated higher gusts as reported from meso-net stations

CAZ096>097	S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns								
	14	0400PST 1500PST			0	0			Winter Storm
Kings County Lemoore	14	0930PST 1200PST			0	0			Heavy Rain
CAZ098>099	Indian Wells Vly - Se Kern Cty Desert								
	14	1313PST 1353PST			0	0	2K		Strong Wind (MG56)

In the Southern Sierra and Tulare County Mountains at the higher elevations substantial snow fell primarily during the morning of the 14th. Estimated amounts included Chilkoat Meadow 15 inches of new snow, Volcanic Knob 13", Beach Meadow 22", and Lodgepole 15". Pre-frontal wind was also present as the foothill areas reported southeast wind gusts to 35 MPH at Catheys Valley. Post-frontal conditions later in the day had north winds sustained at 41 MPH in the Indian Wells Valley area with a gust to 64 MPH. Jawbone RAWs had northwest wind gusts to 58 MPH. Locally heavy rain occurred on the San Joaquin Valley floor with the city of Lemoore reporting street flooding in the late morning hours from 0.41" of rain in that short period

CAZ089>092	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley								
	16	0137PST			0	0	160K		Dense Fog
	18	1130PST							

In a favorable environment, morning fog developed over a 3-day period from the 16th through the 18th. The morning of the 18th had the worst fog with law enforcement reporting visibility as low as 75 feet on area highways. Numerous vehicle accidents occurred with at least 4 indirect deaths and 3 indirect injuries.

CAZ089>092	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley								
	16	0300PST			0	0			Frost/Freeze
	17	0900PST							

Temperatures dropped to the upper 20s in the colder locations around the Central and South San Joaquin Valley on the mornings of the 16th and 17th. Some fog formation minimized temperature falls. Coldest readings reported during the period: Delano 26F; Nicholas Ranch, Wasco, and Colonel Allensworth State Park 28F; and, Merced, Jasmin, and Kettleman City 29F

CAZ096	S Sierra Mtns								
	20	1900PST			0	0			Heavy Snow
	21	0400PST							

A weaker weather system moved through Central California the night of the 20th depositing up to 8" new snow at high elevation mountain locations from Fresno County northward.

CAZ089>092	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley								
	21	0245PST 1200PST			0	0			Dense Fog

Dense fog formation late in the morning of the 21st forced local law enforcement to restrict traffic speeds at several locations in the Central and South San Joaquin Valley.

CAZ091>092-095	Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley - Kern Cty Mtns								
	23	0054PST 1200PST			0	0	3K		Strong Wind (MG35)

Strong southeast winds over the Extreme Southern San Joaquin Valley posed threats to high profile vehicles on State Highways in that vicinity. In the Kern Mountains around Frazier Park wind also reached 35 knots



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CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ096>097	S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns								
	24	0700PST			0	0			Winter Storm
	25	2100PST							

CAZ094>095	Tulare Cty Foothills - Kern Cty Mtns								
	25	1800PST			0	0			Heavy Snow
	26	0400PST							

A significant winter weather event on Christmas brought large amounts of snow to the higher elevations of the Southern Sierra Nevada (24" at Lodgepole, 33" at Crabtree Meadow and Chagoopa Plateau, and 39" at Agnew Pass) while significant snow fell at lower elevations (4" snowfall down to 2700 feet M.S.L.) in the Tulare County Foothills and Kern County Mountains. In the 4-hour time period from 0000 PST to 0400 PST on the 26th 8" of new snow fell in the Tulare County Mountains. Highway 58 was closed for a time and traffic over Interstate-5 was escorted as snow fell on those heavily traveled routes through the Tehachapi Mountains. Precipitation totals at higher elevations (water equivalent) were 7.30" at Lodgepole (Tulare County), 5.20" at Giant Forest (Tulare), 4.89" at Mammoth Pass (Madera), 4.23" at Pascoes (Tulare), 3.74" at Wishon (Fresno), and 3.60" at Yosemite (Mariposa).

Fresno County

Fresno	24	2200PST			0	0			Heavy Rain
	25	1600PST							

Kern County

Bakersfield	24	2300PST			0	0			Heavy Rain
	25	1900PST							

CAZ092

Se S.J. Valley	Se S.J. Valley								
	25	1707PST			0	0	30K		Flood
		2100PST							

Locally heavy rain on the Southern San Joaquin Valley floor and adjacent foothills led to flooding at several locations over the South Valley due to runoff, including the city of Bakersfield. Fresno received 0.99" of rain for the day shattering the old record of 0.53" set in 1946. Bakersfield receive 0.91" of rain eclipsing their old daily rainfall record of 0.76" set in 1931. A storm total precipitation of 1.54" was reported by a spotter just east of Fresno. Large amounts of snow fell in the neighboring Sierra Nevada Mountains. Some other higher storm precipitation totals at the lower elevations were 2.40" at Glennville, 2.28" at Mariposa, and 0.55" at Mojave and 0.46" at China Lake in the Kern Deserts. There were 4 indirect deaths in vehicles caused by the heavy rainfall southeast of Bakersfield.

CAZ089>092

W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley								
	27	0000PST			0	0			Frost/Freeze
	28	0900PST							

Following the significant and cold winter storm over Christmas, cold air brought freezing conditions to the floor of the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley on the mornings of the 27th and 28th. Overnight low temperatures recorded ranged from 26F to 30F for much of the area with many readings around 28F.

CAZ096>097

S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns	S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns								
	29	0600PST			0	0			Winter Storm
	30	0600PST							

In a late month storm snow totals at elevations from 6000 feet M.S.L. and above varied from 18" at Kibbie Ridge to 26" at Paradise Meadow in the Southern Sierra Nevada and from 10" at Pascoes to 17" at Crabtree Meadow in the Tulare County Mountains.

CAZ089>090-093

W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - S Sierra Foothills	W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - S Sierra Foothills								
	29	1703PST			0	0	3K		Strong Wind (MG40)
		2200PST							

Prefrontal southeast wind swept through the Central San Joaquin Valley and adjacent foothill areas the evening of the 29th.



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					Killed	Injured	Property	Crops	

CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ089>092

W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley

31	0216PST 2335PST				0	0			Dense Fog
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Dense fog formed in the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley on the morning of the 31st hindering traffic movement with visibilities lowered to less than 1000 feet. Dense fog reformed briefly and then dissipated in the evening of the 31st in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.