

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - October 2014

Location	Date/Time	Deaths & Injuries	Property & Crop Dmg	Event Type and Details
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z090) E CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z092) SE S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z093) S SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z094) TULARE CTY FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z095) KERN CTY MTNS, (CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS, (CA-Z097) TULARE CTY MTNS, (CA-Z098) INDIAN WELLS VLY, (CA-Z099) SE KERN CTY DESERT

10/01/14 00:00 PST	0	Drought
10/31/14 23:59 PST	0	

The California drought continued in full force during the month of October, 2014. Exceptional drought was detected by the U.S. Drought Monitor for almost the entire Central California region. This extent of exceptional drought is extremely unusual for California. The 2013-2014 water year (July 1 - June 30) concluded with Fresno setting its second driest on record (4.81 inches) and Bakersfield setting its third driest (2.41 inches).

There continues to be significant media coverage on the on-going drought conditions. These reports include discussion of significant re-allocation of water resources from the east to west side of the San Joaquin Valley, farmers forgoing planting of some crops, a decrease in the snow-related tourism activity in the Southern Sierra Nevada, reduction in air quality due to persistent stagnant air, loss or reduction of ground water, wells drying up in several communities leaving them with no water, and an unprecedented increase in fire danger across the Southern Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains. For the first time on record, red flag warnings were issued in January for not only the Southern Sierra Nevada and the Tehachapi Mountains but also the south end of the San Joaquin Valley.

(CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS

10/07/14 15:39 PST	0	Wildfire
10/12/14 18:00 PST	0	

The Dog Rock fire started October 7, 2014. It was caused by sparks generated by hot metal fragments from a vehicle along highway 140 between El Portal and the entrance to Yosemite National Park. Highway 140 was closed in the vicinity of the fire, restricting entrance into Yosemite National Park for 5 days. The fire burned 311 acres before being contained on October 12, 2014. Cost of containment was \$2.5 million.

There was one fatality. An air tanker fighting the fire crashed on October 7, 2014, killing the pilot.

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY

10/14/14 15:00 PST	0	High Wind (MAX 54 kt)
10/14/14 20:30 PST	0	

(CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY

10/14/14 16:00 PST	0	Dust Storm
10/14/14 20:30 PST	0	

A trough of low pressure moving into northern California brought no rain to central California, but did increase the westerly winds across the coastal mountains and into the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. These winds increased in the late afternoon and continued through the evening with gusts to 40 to 60 mph common through and below the passes and gaps in the coastal mountains, especially through and below Cottonwood Pass along Highway 41. Sunflower Valley APRS reported a peak wind gust of 59 mph at 1906 PST. Panoche Road RAWS reported a peak wind gust of 62 mph at 1907 PST. These strong winds were blowing across Interstate 5 and highway 41. Due to the extended period of drought across the San Joaquin Valley, the winds caused blowing dust across most of the west side of the valley. Visibility was reduced to near zero in blowing dust, resulting in stopped traffic along Interstate 5 and highway 41 and other county roads between Avenal and Lost Hills. There were at least 7 accidents reported and highway 41 was closed from near Avenal to where it intersects highway 46 in San Luis Obispo county for at least 3 hours.

(CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS, (CA-Z097) TULARE CTY MTNS

10/31/14 19:00 PST	0	Heavy Snow
10/31/14 23:59 PST	0	

(CA-Z092) SE S.J. VALLEY

10/31/14 21:00 PST	2K	Strong Wind (MAX 39 kt)
10/31/14 21:40 PST	0	

KERN COUNTY --- 6.0 W BAKERSFIELD [35.37, -119.11]

10/31/14 22:00 PST	0	Heavy Rain
10/31/14 23:59 PST	0	Source: Law Enforcement

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Roadway flooding due to heavy rain. Estimated rainfall 0.75 inches.

TULARE COUNTY --- 5.0 WNW TULARE [36.25, -119.43]

10/31/14 22:00 PST	0	Heavy Rain
10/31/14 23:59 PST	0	Source: Law Enforcement

Roadway flooding due to heavy rain. Estimated rainfall 0.75 inches.

The storm system that moved into central California on October 31, 2014 brought heavy snow in the mountains and significant rainfall to the San Joaquin Valley, along with gusty winds from the afternoon of October 30 to the morning of November 1. This was the first significant storm of winter 2014-2015 for central California.

As the storm approached, winds began to blow through the passes of the coastal mountains into the west side of the San Joaquin Valley on the evening of October 30. Winds gusted 35 to 45 mph for several hours in the late afternoon and evening.

Light rain arrived in the northwestern portion of the San Joaquin Valley, near Los Banos between 1 and 2 pm PST, but the more significant rain did not arrive until 4 pm PST on October 31. The rain spread slowly south and east across the Valley through the evening as snow developed in the Sierra Nevada. Ahead of the leading edge of precipitation, gusty winds developed, resulting in areas of blowing dust for a brief period before the rain began. Winds gusted up to 45 mph in Bakersfield with a report of wind damage.

Rainfall amounts ranged from a minimum 0.03 inches in the Kern County Desert, to a maximum of 2.57 inches in the Sierra Foothills. Across the San Joaquin Valley, rain was in the 0.5 to 1.00 inch range. The heavy rain caused minor flooding on roadways, but in general was seen as beneficial due to the ongoing exceptional drought conditions.

Snow amounts in the Sierra Nevada were 10 to 17 inches with the heaviest amounts occurring above 6000 feet. As much as 7 inches of snow was reported as low as 4000 feet elevation.