



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



March 2004

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

CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ096

S Sierra Mtns

01 1400PST
02 0400PST

0 0

Heavy Snow

Frontal passage brought 8-9 inches of new snow to the higher elevations of the S.Sierra Nevada ending on on the 2nd of the month. The next rainfall/snowfall did not occur again until the 25th of what is normally a wet month for the region

CAZ089>092

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

08 1400PST
22 1800PST

0 0

Excessive Heat

Two of the three normally wettest months had extensive dry spells over the course of the 2003/2004 wet season in Interior Central California. To underscore the significance of the March dry spell, Fresno had only 40% of its normal rainfall in January with much of that amount falling within the first 3 days of the month and only 80% of its normal rain for February. February mountain rainfall was closer to normal. But during March there were just two brief episodes of rain for the Central and South San Joaquin Valley and though the amounts were significant there was over 3 weeks of no rain accompanied by much above temperatures. Bakersfield tied or broke a total of 25 temperature records during the month including the warmest March on record eclipsing the old record set in 1934. Fresno had 11 days where maximum temperatures climbed to 80F or above resetting the 1972 record of 10 days. In the South Valley Bakersfield had 17 days of 80F or higher resetting its record of 16 days set in 1934. During March in Bakersfield 3 of the days had readings greater than 90F including a 94F high temperature on the 29th which was the warmest reading on record for the month. With the unseasonable warmth and long periods of dry weather in what is normally a wet month, the snowpack in the adjacent mountains began its Spring melt much sooner than normal.

CAZ095-098>099

Kern Cty Mtns - Indian Wells Vly - Se Kern Cty Desert

25 0345PST
26 2100PST

0 0

3K

Strong Wind (MG51)

CAZ096

S Sierra Mtns

25 2300PST
26 0600PST

0 0

Heavy Snow

A late March frontal passage brought short-duration heavy snow to the higher elevations of the Southern Sierra Nevada along with gusty wind conditions to the Kern County Mountain and Desert areas.