

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - April 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

04/01/14 00:00 PST	0	Drought
04/30/14 23:59 PST	0	

The California drought continued in full force during the month of April, 2014. Extreme to 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. In addition precipitation deficits began to mount as the region was nearing the end of the bulk of the rainy season with continued deficits. As the 2013-2014 winter progresses, little rain has fallen across California.

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, 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-Z093) S SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z097) TULARE CTY MTNS

04/25/14 05:00 PST	0	Winter Weather
04/26/14 02:00 PST	0	

(CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS

04/25/14 05:00 PST	0	Winter Storm
04/26/14 02:00 PST	0	

(CA-Z098) INDIAN WELLS VLY

04/25/14 14:00 PST	0.60M	High Wind (MAX 56 kt)
04/25/14 16:00 PST	0	

The storm that moved into northern California during the evening of April 24th brought thunderstorms to the northern part of the state. This was an indicator of the highly unstable airmass accompanying the storm. Thunderstorms developed over central California around midday and had strengthened to near severe levels by the middle of the afternoon. Three Severe Thunderstorm Warnings were issued by WFO Hanford on the 25th, two of which were for a particularly long-lasting storm. Eleven Significant Weather Advisories were issued for non-severe thunderstorms due to the threats of hail and strong outflow winds. Hail estimated at at least a half inch in diameter was reported from these storms, as were wind damage and at least two funnel clouds. The thunderstorms brought appreciable rains to Fresno, giving the city its fourth wettest April 25th on record (0.55 inch; wettest is 0.93 inch in 1952). Bakersfield had a storm total of 0.36 inch. This brought its monthly total to 0.50 inch, just under the average rainfall for April of 0.52 inch. The rainfall from this storm ensured that neither Bakersfield nor Fresno would have its driest rain season on record, although conditions for the season remained much below normal.

A very cold airmass moved into central California behind the cold front. By late on April 25th, snow was being reported down to the 3800-foot elevation, and storm-total snow estimates were as high as 25 inches in the high country of the Southern Sierra Nevada, and up to 3.5 inches in the Tehachapi Mountains. High temperatures in the central and southern San Joaquin Valley on the 26th were only in the 60s, compared to the mid 80s only a week earlier.

Very strong winds developed during the afternoon of April 25th in eastern Kern County. Particularly strong gusts of wind struck a semi truck trailer around 3 PM in the afternoon and caused it to flip. There were then two additional flipped tractor trailers. The CHP closed US 395 as a result of the dangerous cross winds for high profile vehicles. Winds were estimated at 60-70 mph at the time of the event.

An upper-level ridge built along the coast during the last days of April. Temperatures warmed to near normal by April 28th, and continued warming through the end of the month. The last day of the month saw high temperatures in the central and southern San Joaquin Valley reach the low to mid 90s, or 10-15 degrees above normal.

April 2014 tied for the fifth warmest April on record for Fresno. For Bakersfield, April tied for the 14th warmest April on record; one of the Aprils it tied with was from last year.

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VIDEO: Three big rigs blown over on 395 this afternoon due to ...

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Image of an overturned semi tractor trailer (one of three) on U.S. 395 near Inyokern. Image is courtesy of High Desert News.