

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - January 2009

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

01/11/09 04:53 PST	0	Dense Fog
01/11/09 09:30 PST	0	

High pressure built into California, bringing widespread dense fog to the central and southern San Joaquin Valley on January 10th. As the upper-level ridge strengthened, the fog was suppressed and temperatures warmed to well above normal. Although the fog was suppressed, patchy dense fog was still an almost daily early morning occurrence, especially in the area bounded by Hanford, Visalia and Selma.

(CA-Z095) KERN CTY MTNS, (CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS

01/23/09 23:35 PST	0	Winter Weather
01/26/09 07:52 PST	0	

FRESNO COUNTY --- 3.3 W REEDLEY AIRPORT [36.67, -119.51]

01/24/09 13:25 PST	0	Funnel Cloud
01/24/09 13:25 PST	0	Source: NWS Employee

This funnel cloud was observed from the north side of Hanford.

MERCED COUNTY --- 2.1 SSE STEVINSON [37.30, -120.84]

01/25/09 17:03 PST	0	Funnel Cloud
01/25/09 17:03 PST	0	Source: Trained Spotter

A trained SKYWARN spotter reported a funnel cloud that extended part of the way to the ground.

The storm that arrived on the 22nd was the first, and warmer, of two storms that brought most of the precipitation for the month. Although snow levels with the first storm remained high, 11 inches of new snow fell at Tuolumne Meadows on the 23rd, while Lodgepole, at 6735 feet, reported only rain. Clouds over the San Joaquin Valley pushed into the slopes of the Southern Sierra Nevada, creating areas of dense fog, especially in the foothills.

The second storm took a more southerly track. The upper-level low associated with this storm dropped to off the central California coast on the 23rd. The circulation around this low spun showers northward into southwestern Kern County. A significant upper-level disturbance moved over interior central California during the afternoon of January 24th. As this disturbance passed over the San Joaquin Valley, it triggered a line of showers and thunderstorms that extended from Stratford northeast to Auberry. One of the thunderstorms, between Sanger and Reedley, spawned a funnel cloud that was observed from north Hanford by a National Weather Service employee.

The heaviest snow from this storm was over the Kern County mountains. Storm totals included 10 inches of new snow at Alta Sierra at the south end of the Sierra Nevada, and 4 inches at Bear Valley Springs in the Tehachapi Mountains. The snow level plummeted with the second storm, with snow falling as low as 3000 feet on the Grapevine, although snow did not stick below 4000 feet.

Another upper-level disturbance dropped south over the San Joaquin Valley during the late afternoon/early evening of January 25th. As on the previous day, this disturbance also triggered convective activity. A line of showers and thunderstorms initially stretched from Livingston to Coalinga. One thunderstorm near Livingston spawned the second funnel cloud of the weekend around sunset. Both funnel clouds remained well above the ground, and neither posed any risk of becoming tornadic.

As the line of showers and thunderstorms shifted south, following the upper-level disturbance, the showers became more numerous over the southern San Joaquin Valley. Although thunderstorm activity ended after sunset, some of the showers produced locally heavy rainfall.

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01/30/09 05:35 PST	0	Dense Fog
01/31/09 10:31 PST	0	

An upper-level ridge of high pressure moved into California in the wake of the previous storm system, producing daily patchy late night and morning dense fog. Dense fog developed by the 28th, and became widespread on the 30th and 31st, resulting in dense fog advisories being issued for both mornings for much of central California.