Criteria for Winter Storm Watches/Warnings and Winter Weather Advisories

Winter Storm Watch:

Winter Storm Watches are issued when conditions are ***favorable*** for hazardous winter weather conditions to develop over part or all of the County Warning Forecast Area. A watch is issued to give an advanced notice of the potential occurrence of a winter storm. Winter Storm Watches are issued for events in the 24 to 36 hour period from the start of the storm. Occasionally, a watch may be issued for time frames beyond 48 hours before the storms starts.

Winter Storm Warning:

Winter Storm Warnings are issued when hazardous winter weather is occurring, imminent, or highly likely over part or all of the County Warning Forecast Area. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued in the period of 12 to 24 hours before the storm starts, and occasionally beyond that as much as 36 hours before the storm moves into the region.

Criteria for Winter Storm Watches and Warnings

Blizzard:

1. Sustained wind or frequent gusts to 35 mph or greater; **and**
2. Considerable falling and/or blowing snow reducing visibility frequently to less than 1/4 mile for 3 or more hours.

Heavy snow:

1. **For Randolph, Lawrence, Greene, Clay counties in Arkansas; the Missouri Bootheel; and Lake, Dyer, Obion, Gibson, Weakley, Henry and Carroll counties in Tennessee:**
a. Accumulations of 4 inches or more in 12 hours; or
b. Accumulations of 6 inches or more in 24 hours.
2. **For elsewhere:**
a. Accumulations of 3 inches or more in 12 hours; or
b. Accumulations of 4 inches or more in 24 hours.

Ice (Freezing Rain):

Accumulations of one-quarter of an inch or greater are expected.

Sleet:

Accumulations of one-half of an inch or greater are expected.

Combination of Snow, Sleet or Ice:

Two inches of snow with any accumulations of sleet and/or ice (freezing rain) expected.

Note: Forecasters may consider the impacts of winter weather to the region and do have discretion to issues watches and warning for severe impacts to travel, commerce, or hazard to life and property even if not reaching the numerical criteria above.

Winter Weather Advisory:

Winter Weather Advisories are issued for events that have a high likelihood of occurrence, are imminent, or are already occurring. However, advisories are issued for wintry weather that creates a considerable inconvenience while not posing an immediate or direct threat to life or property, nor a widespread disruption of commerce. Winter Weather Advisories are usually issued in the period of 12 to 24 hours before the storm starts, and occasionally beyond that as much as 36 hours before the storm moves into the region.

Criteria for Winter Weather Advisories

A. Snow:

Accumulations of more than 1 inch, but less than warning criteria are expected.

B. Ice (Freezing Rain)/Sleet:

Any accumulations that are less than warning criteria are expected.

Wind Chill Advisories and Warnings

Wind Chill Advisory:

A Wind Chill Advisory should be issued when widespread conditions of 0 degree F or lower wind chills are expected to last for more than an hour.

Wind Chill Warning:

A Wind Chill Warning should be issued when widespread conditions of -18 degree F or lower wind chills are expected to last for more than an hour.