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FOG...

A "Tranquil Killer"!

It doesn't roar like the wind or flash brightly across the sky like lightning, but it can be just as deadly if you're not "fog aware". Fog is deceptive, dangerous and *potentially deadly*. Fog will not make a sudden shocking sound or a flash to alert you of trouble. Instead, you'll just roll into it, and if you're not prepared or you make a poor decision, it will lead to disastrous consequences.

What is fog?

Fog is simply a cloud on the ground. One of the most common forms of fog is "radiation fog". Radiation fog forms when the air just above the ground cools, or "radiates" its heat away, and the moisture condenses.

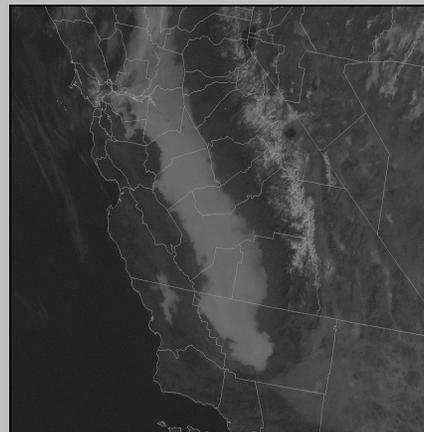
Fog is fickle by nature. Visibilities can drop abruptly or vary greatly in a span of only a few hundred feet! When fog is forecast, be aware that the visibility is rarely uniform. The varying nature of where fog forms, lifts from, or persists the longest, depends on a variety

of atmospheric factors, such as the wind pattern, soil moisture and temperature, local geography, and land use.

Freezing fog refers to fog that forms when the temperature is at or below 32 degrees and small water droplets come in contact with any sub-freezing surface (such as sidewalks, roads, and overpasses). This can result in a thin layer of ice forming on the road, causing extremely dangerous travel conditions.

Fog In The Valley

Fog can be found in all parts of California. It is infrequent across the deserts, but in the Great Central Valley and near and along the coast, it is much more common. Central Valley fog is found during the "cool season" which runs from October through April. During this time of year several factors come into play that are not present during the warmer months. Storm systems are more common and bring precipitation to the area; this brings the moisture needed for fog to form. On some days the visibility will drop below one-quarter of a mile, resulting in dense fog. During an average year, about 30 days feature dense fog across the Central Valley. The occurrence of fog is more frequent and of longer duration in the lowest-lying spots toward the center of the valley. Locally, fog in the Central Valley is called "Tule Fog" because it often forms in areas where the tules once grew (bulrush plants that grew near rivers in Central California).



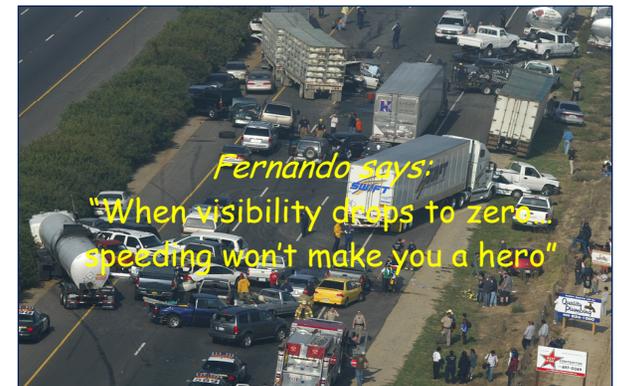
Visible satellite images like this show Central Valley fog

Fernando the Fog Frog's Advice: "When the fog gets dense...drive with common sense!"

Don't become a statistic! Each year dozens of people are killed in accidents across the country on days when the visibility is reduced due to fog. **In the Central Valley of California, vehicle accidents in fog are the most frequent type of weather-related fatality.**

If you encounter dense fog that suddenly reduces your visibility, make the right decision by following Fernando's sage advice:

- **When the visibility gets low, its time to drive slow!** Slow down! Allow extra stopping distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- **Use low beams at night when dense fog hinders your sight.** High beams reflect off fog and make visibility worse.
- **Unless absolutely necessary, never stop on any freeway or heavily traveled road - Find a safe place to pull over!** If you must stop, find a safe area on the shoulder, as far from traffic as possible. Don't enter the road until conditions improve.
- **Avoid crossing traffic. Stop and listen.** Roll your windows down if necessary to hear approaching vehicles.
- **Use windshield wipers, defroster and air conditioner to maximize your vision.** Keep your window glass clean.
- **Turn down the radio!** Increase awareness of your surroundings by listening to the traffic instead.
- **Consider postponing your trip** until conditions improve, especially if it is non-essential.
- **Be patient - When it's too foggy to pass, lay off the gas!**



Courtesy: The Fresno Bee/John Walker, Photographer.
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DON'T be Fooled by Fog!

Fog affects everyone wherever it forms.

Whether you need to travel by car, plane or boat, fog cuts your vision. This results in less reaction time to stop, make a turn, change lanes, navigate through a narrow space or take off in an airplane.

Traveling during fog can be risky. You may be aware and take precautions, but others around may not. When fog shows up, there's someone you can turn to for recommendations on what to do...

Fernando the Fog Frog!

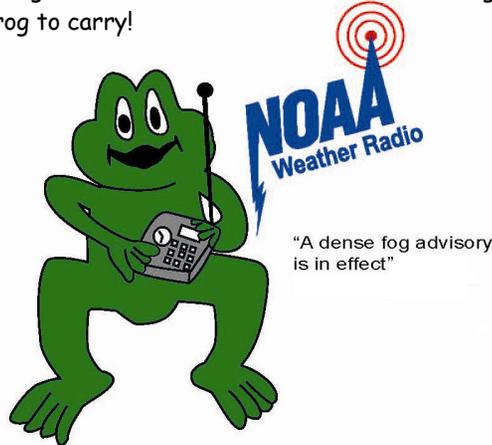
WHO'S FERNANDO THE FOG FROG?

Hi! My name is Fernando the Fog Frog! I'm from the Great Central Valley of California. I like to go outside at night and travel through the area. During my travels I often encounter something called fog. Many people don't realize how dangerous fog can be. They try to drive as they would in normal, clear conditions. Fog is dangerous any time of the day but especially at night, when darkness makes it even harder for people to see me. How do I know what it's like? When I go outside and fog is around, it makes it hard for me to do things, like jump around from one town to another!



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Do you want an easy way to be aware about the weather *right now*? Use a **NOAA Weather Radio**. These are specially designed radios that continuously broadcast warnings, watches, forecasts and current conditions on one of seven frequencies. Look for them at retail stores and online. A NOAA Weather Radio with battery back-up and Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) features is highly recommended, since it will automatically alert you when a watch or warning is issued for your area. Some NOAA Weather Radio models are portable and you can carry them on your travels - they can fit in your pocket or glove box - and some are even small enough for a frog to carry!



A **DENSE FOG ADVISORY** is issued when widespread visibilities of less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile are expected. Follow the age old advice of Fernando the Fog Frog: "When the fog gets dense...drive with common sense!"

Get Informed...Go Online!
Check out our website at
weather.gov/hanford

This brochure was produced by NOAA/NWS Hanford, CA.
Thanks to Chris Stachelski and Katie Mendenhall for creative design.



When fog appears...
do you know what to do?
Fernando the Fog Frog
has important
information for you!



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