

ZCZC SEAPNSSEW DEF
TTAA00 KSEW DDHHMM

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SEATTLE WA
1130 AM PST FRI DEC 21 2012

...2012 WESTERN WASHINGTON WEATHER YEAR IN REVIEW...

THE YEAR BEGAN WITH THE SECOND OF TWO LA NINAS – ONLY THE FIFTH TIME FOR BACK TO BACK LA NINAS SINCE 1950. THE YEAR FINISHED WITH NEUTRAL CONDITIONS WITH A VARIETY OF ACTIVE FALL WEATHER. IT WAS A WET YEAR OVERALL...ALTHOUGH THE SUMMER WAS EXCEPTIONALLY DRY.

THE BIG WEATHER STORY OF THE YEAR WAS THE SNOW AND ICE STORM EVENT IN MID JANUARY. THIS WAS A HISTORIC EVENT CONSIDERING HOW LARGE AN AREA THAT WAS IMPACTED AND THE DURATION OF THE EVENT. ONE OF THE HEAVIEST DAILY SNOWFALLS OCCURRED IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON WHEN OVER A FOOT OF SNOW FELL IN SOME AREAS ON THE 18TH. AN ICE STORM ON JANUARY 19TH WHEN UP TO 1.5 INCHES OF ICE ACCUMULATED IN AREAS EAST OF PUGET SOUND DOWN INTO SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON. A MAN WAS KILLED AS AN ICE-LADEN TREE FELL ON HIM NEAR ISSAQUAH. A HALF MILLION PEOPLE LOST POWER AND THOUSANDS OF TREES AND LIMBS FELL UNDER HEAVY ICE. PROPERTY DAMAGE TOTALS WAS NEAR 7 MILLION DOLLARS.

ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENT WAS IN MID FEBRUARY WHEN THREE DIFFERENT AVALANCHES RESULTED IN FOUR FATALITIES. DURING 2012 ADVERSE WEATHER RESULTED IN A TOTAL OF 6 FATALITIES AND TWO INJURIES. REPORTED PROPERTY DAMAGE FROM ADVERSE WEATHER THROUGH OCTOBER WAS ABOUT 8.5 MILLION DOLLARS NOT INCLUDING DAMAGE REPORTS WHICH WERE NOT YET AVAILABLE FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER.

A FEW UNSEASONABLY WARM DAYS OCCURRED IN EARLY FEBRUARY. THE MERCURY CLIMBED TO AROUND 60 DEGREES FOR HIGHS AT SEA-TAC ON THE 3RD THROUGH THE 7TH. A COOL WEATHER PATTERN DEVELOPED AT MID-MONTH THAT WOULD LAST THROUGH MARCH. MARCH WAS SEVERAL DEGREES BELOW NORMAL AND TWICE AS WET AS AVERAGE. SNOWPACK WAS ABOUT 150 PERCENT OF NORMAL BY EARLY SPRING WHICH IS TYPICAL FOR LA NINA CONDITIONS.

APRIL WAS PRETTY TYPICAL WITH HIGHS THAT MADE IN INTO THE 70S IN SOME AREAS ON THE 22ND AND 23RD...BUT THE MONTH WAS NEAR AVERAGE OTHERWISE. MAY WAS ALSO CLOSE TO NORMAL...WITH A FEW WARM DAYS BREAKING UP PERIODS OF COOL WET WEATHER. MAY 12TH THROUGH THE 16TH HAD THE WARMEST WEATHER OF THE MONTH AND HIGH RIVERS COMBINED WITH THE WARMTH LED TO DROWNINGS IN WESTERN WASHINGTON RIVERS

AND LAKES.

MAY AND JUNE HAD HIGHS THAT AVERAGED ABOUT 65 DEGREES BUT THE GRADUAL SPRING WARMUP STARTED TO LAG IN JUNE. SUMMER WEATHER FINALLY ARRIVED IN JULY WHEN HIGHS WARMED TO THE 70S WITH SEVERAL DAYS IN THE 80S.

AUGUST WAS DRY AND MOST OF WESTERN WASHINGTON RECEIVED LITTLE IF ANY RAIN. IT WAS THE DRIEST AUGUST ON RECORD FOR A FEW LOCATIONS INCLUDING SEA- TAC AIRPORT. THERE WERE TWO MAIN PERIODS OF HOT WEATHER AROUND THE 4TH AND 5TH AND AGAIN AT MID MONTH. THE DRY WEATHER WOULD EXTEND THROUGH SEPTEMBER AND THE FIRST PART OF OCTOBER SEVERAL WILDFIRES OCURRED IN WESTERN WASHINGTON AND STREAM FLOWS DROPPED TO EXTREMELY LOW LEVELS.

NORMAL FALL RAINS STARTED UP IN MID OCTOBER. OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS THE SEATTLE METRO AREA HAD RECIVED ABOUT 20 INCHES OF RAIN. SNOW DEPTHS IN THE CASCADES WERE WELL ABOVE AVERAGE BY MID DECEMBER AFTER A PERIOD OF STORMY WEATHER. ONE NOTABLE STORM IN DECEMBER COINCIDED WITH THE ANNUAL HIGH TIDES. A STRONG LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM CAME ASHORE ON THE 17TH AND A LOW SEA LEVEL PRESSURE OF 980 MILLIBARS IN SEATTLE HELPED DRIVE THE HIGH TIDE TO A RECORD 14.5 FEET.

OVERALL THE CALENDAR YEAR 2012 CAN BE DESCRIBED BY WET COOL BOOKENDS WITH A WARM DRY PERIOD IN THE MIDDLE. OVERALL IT WAS A WET YEAR. THROUGH MID DECEMBER QUILLAYUTE ON THE NORTH COAST ACCUMULATED 115 INCHES OF RAIN FOR THE YEAR SO FAR. SEA TAC HAD 34 INCHES AND OLYMPIA 46 INCHES SO FAR...BOTH TEN INCHES ABOVE NORMAL. WITH RECORDS DATING BACK TO 1945 SEA TAC AIRPORT WAS ON A PACE TO EASILY FINISH THE YEAR IN THE TOP TEN WETTEST YEARS AND SITTING IN 8TH PLACE AS OF DECEMBER 20.

THERE WERE SOME RECORD HIGH TEMPERATURES IN 2012. HIGHS TEMPERATURES SOARED INTO THE LOWER TO MID 90S ON THE COAST ON AUGUST 4TH AND DAILY RECORD HIGHS WERE SET. THE WARMEST HIGH TEMPERATURE AT SEA TAC DURING THE YEAR WAS 94 DEGREES ON AUGUST 16TH BUT DID NOT BREAK THE RECORD FOR THE DATE. OLYMPIA HIT 96 THAT DAY AND TIED THE RECORD. THOSE RECORDS ARE AMONG THE HIGH AND LOW TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION RECORDS LISTED BELOW ALONG WITH A LIST OF SIGNIFICANT 2012 EVENTS IN WESTERN WASHINGTON.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

TORNADOES AND WATERSPOUTS

OCTOBER 20 – WATERSPOUT OBSERVED BY SEVERAL PEOPLE NEAR GEDNEY (HAT) ISLAND NORTHWEST OF EVERETT.

LIGHTNING

FOUR SEPARATE LIGHTING EVENTS OCCURRED IN JULY WHICH IS HIGHLY UNUSUAL... LIGHTING ON THE 13TH CAUSED A FIRE WHICH DID 100000 DOLLARS DAMAGE TO A HOUSE AFTER BLOWING THE OCCUPANT CLEAR ACROSS A ROOM. LIGHTNING ON THAT SAME DAY DID MINOR DAMAGE TO THE COMPUTERS USED TO OPERATE THE HOOD CANAL BRIDGE.

HAIL

NO SEVERE SIZED HAIL – 1 INCH OR GREATER DIAMETER – WAS REPORTED DURING THE YEAR ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A NUMBER OF REPORTS OF SMALL HAIL, ICE PELLETS AND GRAUPEL OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR.

HIGH WINDS

JANUARY 2—COAST AND NORTH INTERIOR – WINDS OF UP TO 45 MPH.

JANUARY 4—BRIEF HIGH WIND CENTRAL COAST AND NEAR BELLINGHAM – WINDS OF UP 45 MPH.

JANUARY 5—BRIEF HIGH WIND WESTERN WHATCOM COUNTY – WINDS UP TO 45 MPH.

JANUARY 18—BRIEF HIGH WIND OCCURRED NORTH COAST AND WESTERN WHATCOM COUNTY. WINDS OF UP TO 58 MPH.

JANUARY 22—COAST AND NORTHWEST INTERIOR – WINDS OF UP TO 58 MPH.

JANUARY 24—HIGH WIND NORTH INTERIOR AND NEAR CARNATION – WINDS OF UP TO 60 MPH.

FEBRUARY 7—NEAR ENUMCLAW – STRONG EAST WINDS OF UP TO 70 MPH.

FEBRUARY 17 18 ADMIRALTY INLET AREA – WINDS OF UP TO 45 MPH.

FEBRUARY 24 AND 26—CENTRAL COAST. ADMIRALTY INLET AREA. WESTERN SKAGIT COUNTY. WINDS OF UP TO 59 MPH.

MARCH 11—COAST...NORTHWEST INTERIOR...OLYMPICS. WINDS OF UP TO 60 MPH.

MARCH 15-20-28-29—SIMILAR EVENTS OF BRIEF HIGH WIND WESTERN WHATCOM

COUNTY AND SAN JUANS. WINDS OF UP TO 45 MPH.

OCTOBER 14—BRIEF HIGH WIND BELLINGHAM – WINDS OF UP TO 40 MPH.

NOVEMBER 18 19—HIGH WINDS COAST AND NORTH INTERIOR – WINDS OF UP TO 70 MPH. POWER OUTAGES FOR UP TO 25000 CUSTOMERS.

NOVEMBER 29—BRIEF HIGH WIND NEAR BELLINGHAM- WINDS UP TO 45 MPH.

DECEMBER 16-17 – THE STRONGEST WIND EVENT OF THE FALL SEASON IN MUCH OF WESTERN WASHINGTON. WINDS UP TO 70 MPH ALONG THE COAST AND NORTH INTERIOR. POWER OUTAGES TO ABOUT 50000 CUSTOMERS.

WINTER STORMS

JANUARY 14-15 HEAVY SNOW ENHANCED BY PUGET SOUND CONVERGENCE ZONE CASCADES

JANUARY 14—HEAVY SNOW NORTH COAST AND CLALLAM COUNTY EAST INTO SKAGIT COUNTY AND ALSO SOUTHWEST INTERIOR – AMOUNTS OF UP TO 7 INCHES OF SNOW FELL IN PARTS OF THE LOWLANDS IN WESTERN WASHINGTON.

JANUARY 16-18—HEAVY SNOW CACADES – SEVERAL FEET OF SNOW FELL.

JANUARY 16-17—UPPER LEVEL SHORTWAVE TROUGH AND MODIFIED ARCTIC AIR PUSHING INTO WESTERN WASHINGTON GAVE HEAVY SNOW MAINLY NORTHWEST INTERIOR AND EAST SIDE OF PUGET SOUND. UP TO 14 INCHES OF NEW SNOW FELL IN PARTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON WITH THE GREATEST AMOUNTS IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON AND IN PARTS OF SKAGIT COUNTY.

JANUARY 18-19—ADMIRALTY INLET AREA DOWN THROUGH PUGET SOUND BASIN AND ESPECIALLY PARTS OF SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON ON THE 18TH. ICE STORM FROM ABOUT SEATTLE SOUTH THROUGH PIERCE AND THURSTON COUNTY WITH UP TO 1.5 INCHES OF ICE FALLING. THIS WAS A HISTORIC EVENT GIVEN ITS LENGTH OF TIME AND HOW WIDESPREAD IT WAS. ABOUT ONE HALF MILLION CUSTOMERS WITHOUT POWER. ONE FATALITY RESULTING FROM AN ICE-LADEN FALLING TREE NEAR ISSAQUAH AND ONE INJURY REPORTED. DAMAGES REPORTED NEAR 7 MILLION DOLLARS.

JANUARY 20-21—HEAVY SNOW MOUNT BAKER AREA

JANUARY 31—HEAVY SNOW MOUNT BAKER AREA

FEBRUARY 7—HEAVY SNOW CASCADES

FEBRUARY 21 22—HEAVY SNOW MOUNT BAKER AREA

FEBRUARY 24 25—HEAVY SNOW WITH STRONG FRONT AND MOIST WESTERLY FLOW AND PUGET SOUND CONVERGENCE ZONE CASCADES

MARCH 3-5—HEAVY SNOW CASCADES

MARCH 10-12---HEAVY SNOW STEVENS PASS NORTHWARD

MARCH 13-15—SEVERAL EVENTS INCLUDING HEAVY SNOW CASCADES. SNOW LEVEL LOWERED WITH SNOW DOWN TO ABOUT 700 FEET IN EAST PUGET SOUND LOWLANDS. SNOW ENHANCED BY PUGET SOUND CONVERGENCE ZONE

MARCH 20—HEAVY SNOW MAINLY STEVENS PASS SOUTHWARD

MARCH 28-30—HEAVY SNOW CASCADES

DECEMBER 17-20 – PARTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON – THE CASCADES RECEIVED SEVERAL FEET OF SNOW WITH AVALANCHE CONDITIONS CLOSING THE PASSES AT TIMES. IN THE LOWLANDS...THE HOOD CANAL AREA GOT THE MOST SNOW WITH SOME REPORTS OF UP TO A FOOT. OTHER HIGHER HILL LOCATIONS RECEIVED A TRACE TO 5 INCHES.

STORM SURGE

JANUARY 26—NORTHERN INLAND WATERS TO EVERETT AND ADMIRALTY INLET AREA

DECEMBER—SEVERAL OCCURANCES WITH ANNUAL HIGH TIDES PEAKING ON DEC 17 WHEN SEATTLE SET NEW HIGH TIDE RECORD JUST OVER 14.5 FEET (JUST SLIGHTLY EDGING OUT THE OLD RECORD)

AVALANCHE

FEBRUARY 19 – A STRONG FRONT AND MOIST WESTERY FLOW IN ITS WAKE PRODUCED HEAVY SNOW IN THE CASCADES. THREE DIFFERENT AVLANCHES KILLED FOUR PEOPLE AND INJURED ONE OTHER.

FLOODS/HEAVY RAIN/LANDSLIDES

JANUARY 22—MUDSLIDE NEAR SAMMAMISH DAMAGED THREE HOMES – NO DAMAGE REPORTS AVAILABLE.

FEBRUARY 22—NEAR EVERETT - 200000 DOLLARS OF DAMAGE TO SEVERAL HOMES

FEBRUARY 26—NEAR STANWOOD- DAMAGED ONE HOME. DESTROYED

ANOTHER. NO DAMAGE AMOUNTS AVAILABLE.

NOVEMBER 18-21 – HEAVY RAINFALL PRODUCED FLOODING ON THE CHEHALIS...
NEWAUKUM...DESCHUTES...SKOKOMISH RIVERS AND THE PUYALLUP NEAR
ORTING. DAMAGE REPORTS WERE NOT YET AVAILABLE.

HEAT/WILDFIRE

EARLY OCTOBER – SEVERAL LATE SEASON WILDFIRES BROKE OUT NEAR
SHELTON AND BELFAIR. A NUMBER OF HOMES AND OTHER STRUCTURES
BURNED AND AREA HIGHWAYS AND ROADWAYS WERE CLOSED DURING THE
EVENTS. DAMAGES ESTIMATED ABOUT 1.1 MILLION DOLLARS.

OTHER EVENTS

JUNE 23—MICROBURST SNOHOMISH COUNTY NEAR CICERO - TREES UPROOTED
OR SNAPPED IN THUNDERSTORM WINDS . IN WHATCOM COUNTY TREE LIMBS AS
BIG AS 8 TO 10 INCHES AND A FEW TREES WERE BLOWN DOWN AND ONE POWER
LINE FROM THUNDERSTORM WINDS.

SEPTEMBER 28—DENSE FOG. FISHING BOAT COLLISION OFF LA PUSH ONE MAN
LOST.

HERE ARE THE HIGH...LOW AND PRECIPITATION RECORDS THAT WERE BROKEN
DURING 2012. ENTRIES HAVE THE MONTH/DATE OF THE RECORD...WITH THE
RECORD VALUE FOLLOWING. T – MEANS THAT IT WAS TIED.

THERE WERE FAR MORE RECORD HIGH TEMPERATURES THAN LOWS AND
NUMEROUS RAINFALL RECORDS SET.

SEA-TAC AIRPORT...RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1945

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
04/08 70		02/17 0.68
08/05 93		03/29 1.08
10/07 75T		05/03 0.73
11/30 59		05/21 0.55
		06/05 0.63
		06/22 0.62
		07/20 0.60
		10/30 1.36
		11/19 2.13

OLYMPIA AIRPORT...RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1948

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
-----------	----------	---------------

04/23 76	06/09 37T	03/29 1.98
08/05 94	10/04 29T	05/03 1.09
08/16 96T	10/05 28	06/07 0.63
	10/06 28	
	11/10 20	

QUILLAYUTE AIRPORT...RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1967

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
01/02 60	05/11 31	03/12 2.17
03/08 64T		03/28 2.24
05/14 78		03/29 1.80
08/04 95		04/24 0.96
08/15 91		04/25 2.33
08/16 89		06/07 0.94
09/07 89T		06/29 1.14
		07/02 0.57
		10/13 1.75
		10/14 2.62

HOQUIAM AIRPORT – RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1953

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
08/04 91	01/15 25	02/21 1.72
08/15 83	05/19 37T	03/12 2.11
09/07 92	10/03 36T	03/14 1.17
09/17 84T	11/10 30	03/29 1.59
		04/25 0.99
		05/03 0.99
		10/30 2.57
		11/19 2.84

BELLINGHAM AIRPORT – RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1949

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
01/02 59	06/15 39	03/10 0.49
01/03 57	06/20 43T	04/19 1.02
01/04 60	06/25 43T	05/21 0.65
02/02 59	10/05 33	
02/03 72		
02/05 67		
02/06 71		
02/07 60T		
04/08 68		
04/22 71T		
08/05 85		

11/29 60

SEATTLE WFO AT SAND POINT...RECORDS DATE BACK TO 1987

HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	PRECIPITATION
01/01 56	01/15 26T	03/29 1.04
02/03 62T	01/18 27	05/01 0.38
02/07 62T	01/19 27	05/03 0.67
04/08 70	01/20 29T	05/21 0.58
04/21 69T	03/23 33T	06/05 0.90
08/04 90T	04/07 36T	06/07 0.53
08/05 90	05/10 37	06/18 0.24
08/16 91T	05/11 41	06/22 0.91
08/17 91	06/06 47T	06/26 0.09
09/17 81	08/31 49	07/03 0.58
11/30 56	09/12 48T	07/20 0.72
	10/08 43T	10/18 0.67
	11/09 32	10/30 1.20
	11/10 33T	10/31 0.89
		11/19 2.60
		11/30 1.45

GRUB/MCFARLAND/NEHER/BUEHNER