



NEW YORK METRO WEATHER

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Hazardous Weather Briefing | Winter Storm 12/14 - 12/15 2013

Overview: A developing mid and upper level disturbance over the Central United States will slide eastward towards the Ohio Valley, and then redevelop off the Mid-Atlantic coast this weekend, providing a myriad of winter weather threats in our area. When combined with the deep cold arctic air entrenched in the area upon its arrival, the storm seems likely to produce a fairly significant amount of snow and ice, especially away from the coast. But warmer air moving in aloft, and eventually at the surface, presents a forecast headache — as precipitation type will be difficult to predict.

Forecast model at this range are beginning to come into better agreement on the eventual track of the surface low associated with the mid and upper level disturbance. The initial (or primary) surface low seems likely to be driven from the Mississippi Valley into the Northern Mid Atlantic or Ohio Valley. But cold air, reinforced to the north, and associated with a strong high pressure system, and compressing heights aloft will force the storm to redevelop to the south and east off the Mid Atlantic coast before eventually scooting northeastward out to sea. The origin and track of the storm system, however, provide the opportunity for a myriad of threats — and wildly varying results throughout the forecast area.

Timing: Snow is expected to begin throughout the area, starting from southwest to northeast, on Saturday afternoon and evening. The snow should slowly expand and intensify during the evening hours on Saturday and begin to accumulate throughout much of New Jersey and New York, while spreading into Connecticut. By later Saturday evening, snow will begin to transition to sleet and rain across Southern New Jersey and East/Southeastern Long Island. This line of transitioning precipitation types will slowly work northwestward towards Central New Jersey and New York City during the overnight hours.

By early morning on Sunday, much of Southern and Central New Jersey, Long Island and Coastal Connecticut will have transitioned to rain. Interior New Jersey and New York City will likely be transitioning to freezing rain, sleet or rain as well. The progression of this transition will slow a bit as it heads northward, and freezing rain/icing is expected to continue across interior New Jersey and Southeast New York.

Precipitation will taper off (probably as freezing drizzle) throughout the area later on Sunday.

Hazards:

Snow: Significant snowfall is possible across the interior portions of the forecast area, over North and West New Jersey, Southeast New York and Connecticut. A moderate snowfall is likely across the area suburbs of Northern New Jersey, New York City, Connecticut before a changeover to rain. In Central and Southern NJ and along the coastal plain of Long Island, only minor snowfall amounts are expected before the changeover.

Sleet and Freezing Rain: The main concern is the anticipated push of WAA (Warm Air Advection) which will occur as a result of the primary surface low tracking to our north and west. This track will allow the mid level low's to move into the Ohio Valley, and a thin warm layer will develop between 850-900mb (still the low levels of the atmosphere, but well above our heads). The southerly winds at these levels will warm the temperatures there, while cold air remains entrenched at the surface. This raises concern for a period of sleet or freezing rain. The freezing rain could become especially prevalent over the interior, with significant ice accumulations.

Travel Impacts: Travel impacts will likely be high for a period of time on Saturday night, as moderate to heavy snow picks up over the interior and city for a period of time. These travel impacts will begin to lighten near the coast with time overnight on Saturday as precipitation transitions to rain. But west of the city, travel will become even more hazardous on Saturday overnight into Sunday as sleet and freezing rain create a very icy situation.

