

# **BLIZZARD OF Jan. 26-27, 2015**

## **OVERVIEW**

A powerful storm system will develop off the North Carolina coast early Mon., then explosively deepen and move over the 'benchmark' of 40N 70W by Tue. morning. It will then stall and drift only slowly northeastward away from the area on Wed. **This will be a crippling and potentially historic storm, complete with snow measured in feet, damaging winds causing widespread power outages, and serious coastal flooding.**

## **HEADLINES**

- **Blizzard Warning** – northern CT; all of RI; southern Worcester County and all of eastern MA, except Nantucket Island.
- Winter Storm Warning – western MA and northern Worcester County
- Winter Storm Watch – Nantucket
- High Wind Warning – Nantucket (other high wind areas explained in Blizzard Warning)
- Coastal Flood Warning: Salisbury, MA to Chatham, MA, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard, for the Tuesday early morning high tide cycle.
- Marine: **Hurricane Force Wind Warning** for all waters except Boston Harbor, Mass. Bay, Narragansett Bay, and Block Island Sound.

## **IMPORTANT IMPACTS / MESSAGING:**

- 2 to 3 feet of snow can trap people in cars.
- Downed trees/power poles with power possibly out for several days in some areas
- Risks of carbon monoxide poisoning with generators that are not run outside and away from windows. Also risk if autos running and tailpipe is not kept clear.
- Structures vulnerable to coastal flooding will suffer significant damage.
- Recommend that all boats should be in port by Noon Monday.
- Take breaks, if shoveling, to warm up. Wind chills 0 to -5 in western/central MA throughout the storm.
- Stock up on batteries, any needed prescriptions, etc. ahead of the storm.

## **SNOWFALL**

### Amounts:

- **Widespread 20" – 24" with pockets of 30+'' possible.** Only several inches on Nantucket and outer Cape Cod, where rain is expected to mix in.
- This **could come close to rivaling the records** for Boston, which was 27.6" in the Feb. 17-18, 2003 President's Day storm; the 32.1" in Worcester on Dec. 11-12, 1992; and 28.6" in Providence during the Blizzard of Feb. 6-7, 1978.

### Timing:

- Light snow will impact the late afternoon commute...with 1-2" in Boston/Worcester/Springfield and 2-4" in Hartford/Providence by the end of the evening commute.
- **A whopping 12-18" of snow is forecast to fall in a 9-hour period from 1 AM to 10 AM Tuesday!** Thunderstorms will also be occurring in this time window.
- Snow, with varying intensities will continue through Tue. night.

### Character:

- A corridor of heavy, wet snow is expected in southeast MA and southern RI...basically east of I-95. Temperatures there will be in the upper 20s and lower 30s.

- West of I-95, a much fluffier snow is expected, with temperatures in the upper teens and lower 20s.

### **WINDS**

- ***Hurricane force gusts of up to 75 mph are possible on Cape Cod and the Islands***  
Mon night/early Tue; 50-60 mph from Boston to Providence; and 30-40 mph in Hartford and Worcester. Remaining windy through Tue. night.

### **COASTAL FLOODING**

- **Structural damage is likely to occur with coastal flooding with pockets of major coastal flooding on NE-facing shorelines -- from 3 to 3.5 foot storm surge.**
- **Seas building to 25-30 feet eastern MA waters with 50-65 knot northeast winds**
- Astronomical high tide of 10.5 feet in Boston at 4:30 AM Tuesday, not counting the surge.

### **WIND CHILLS**

- Wind chills 0 to 5 below zero degrees in central and western MA Mon. night, Tue., and Tue. night.