

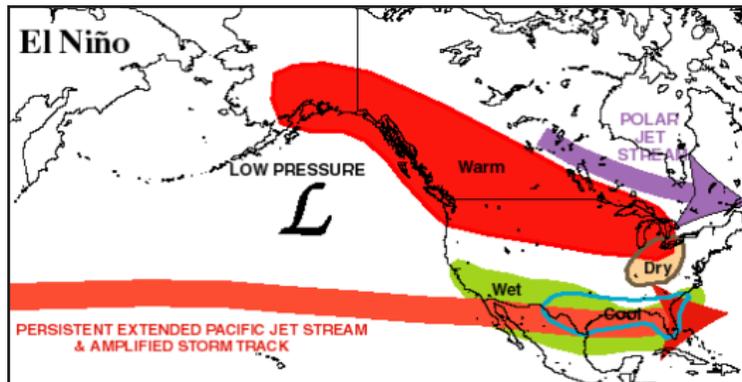


## What is El Niño, and How to Prepare for Strong Rain Events

Maricopa County prepares for significant storms year-round, but especially for this winter storm season. It's important for residents of the County to also prepare in order to keep family, pets, and property safe. Preparing in advance will give you peace of mind and will enable you to help your neighbors if they need help.

### What is El Niño?

El Niño is a prolonged period of warm Pacific Ocean waters near the American Coast that affects weather patterns, temperatures, and rainfall around the globe including the Desert Southwest. This year's El Niño event is expected to be one of the strongest recorded since 1950. Although its influence could begin as early as this month, the atmospheric response usually creates wetter than normal winters in Arizona-peaking from January through April.



Typical January-March weather anomalies and atmospheric circulation during a moderate to strong El Niño.

Weather forecasters expect additional rain storms this year due to El Niño, but it's also important to remember that past strong versions of this weather condition have not always produced significant flooding events in Arizona. In any case, a wet winter is likely, and now is the time to prepare!

### Prepare before a flood event

- **Stay informed.** Keep tuned to local radio and TV stations, and website weather sites.
- **Create a family plan.** Create a communications plan to stay in contact with your family and friends in the event of a flood event (or any disaster), and determine a meeting place in case you become separated.
  - a. Don't forget medicines and special-needs required by family members
  - b. Remember your animals and plan for their needs
- **Assemble an emergency kit** that includes food, drinking water, and a first-aid kit. Make sure the kit is ready at all times to "grab-and-go".
  - a. For home: Generators, cash, gas storage for vehicles. Three days of water and food, first-aid kit, radio, and mobile device chargers. Store important documents, zip drives, money, and cell phone in waterproof Ziploc bags.
  - b. For your car: Extra gas, a blanket, window breaking hammer. Check your tire treads and windshield wipers, consider replacement if needed.
- **Road closure information** can be found at [www.mcdot.maricopa.gov](http://www.mcdot.maricopa.gov).
- **Prepare your home.**
  - a. Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, and plastic sheeting on hand for protection from floodwaters and to make quick repairs after a severe storm.
  - b. Elevate the air conditioner, furnace, water heater, electric panel and other valuables above the anticipated flood elevation. Contact your local community to see if you can construct barriers, berms, or grade your property to safely direct flood water away from the building. For longer term solutions, look into elevating or relocating the building.
- **Purchase flood insurance.** Flood damage is not typically covered by homeowners' insurance policies, so it's important to purchase a flood insurance policy to protect your investment from floods associated with monsoons and other heavy rains that impact Arizona. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers flood insurance, which can be purchased through the insurance agent who handles your homeowners' insurance policy. Note: There is a 30-day waiting period for a policy to go into effect.

---

## Flood Resource Phone Numbers and Websites:

1. Preparing for floods: [www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods)
2. Learn more about flood insurance: [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)
3. Monitor current weather conditions: National Weather Service, [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov)

## Maricopa County Cities & Towns:

For information about local resources and conditions including road closures, please contact your local jurisdiction.

Apache Junction: [www.ajcity.net](http://www.ajcity.net)  
Sun City: [www.suncityaz.org](http://www.suncityaz.org)  
Avondale: [www.Avondale.org](http://www.Avondale.org)  
Surprise: [www.surpriseaz.com](http://www.surpriseaz.com)  
Buckeye: [www.buckeyeaz.gov](http://www.buckeyeaz.gov)  
Tempe: [www.tempe.gov](http://www.tempe.gov)  
Carefree: [www.carefree.org](http://www.carefree.org)  
Tolleson: [www.tollesonaz.org](http://www.tollesonaz.org)  
Cave Creek: [www.cavecreek.org](http://www.cavecreek.org)  
Wickenburg: [www.ci.wickenburg.az.us](http://www.ci.wickenburg.az.us)  
Chandler: [www.chandleraz.gov](http://www.chandleraz.gov)  
Paradise Valley: [www.ci.paradise-valley.az.us](http://www.ci.paradise-valley.az.us)  
Litchfield Park: [www.litchfield-park.org](http://www.litchfield-park.org)  
Youngtown: [www.youngtownaz.org](http://www.youngtownaz.org)  
El Mirage: [www.cityofelmirage.org](http://www.cityofelmirage.org)  
Scottsdale: [www.scottsdaleaz.gov](http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov)  
Fountain Hills: [www.fh.az.gov](http://www.fh.az.gov)  
Queen Creek: [www.queenecreek.org](http://www.queenecreek.org)  
Gila Bend: [www.gilabendaz.org](http://www.gilabendaz.org)  
Phoenix: [www.phoenix.gov](http://www.phoenix.gov)  
Gilbert: [www.gilbertaz.gov](http://www.gilbertaz.gov)  
Peoria: [www.peoriaaz.gov](http://www.peoriaaz.gov)  
Glendale: [www.glendaleaz.com](http://www.glendaleaz.com)  
Mesa: [www.mesaaz.gov](http://www.mesaaz.gov)  
Guadalupe: [www.guadalupeaz.org](http://www.guadalupeaz.org)  
Goodyear: [www.goodyearaz.gov](http://www.goodyearaz.gov)

## Other flood resources:

Maricopa County Emergency Management: [www.maricopa.gov/emerg\\_mgt](http://www.maricopa.gov/emerg_mgt)  
Flood Control District of Maricopa County: [www.fcd.maricopa.gov](http://www.fcd.maricopa.gov)  
Maricopa County Department of Transportation: [www.mcdot.maricopa.gov](http://www.mcdot.maricopa.gov)  
ADOT: [www.azdot.gov](http://www.azdot.gov)  
APS: [www.aps.com](http://www.aps.com)  
SRP: [www.srpnet.com](http://www.srpnet.com)  
SRP EMERGENCIES: (602) 236-8811, [www.srpnet.com/safety/emergency.aspx](http://www.srpnet.com/safety/emergency.aspx)  
FEMA: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
FEMA Flood Smart: [www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart](http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart)