

NOTABLE & HISTORIC THANKSGIVING SNOW EVENTS

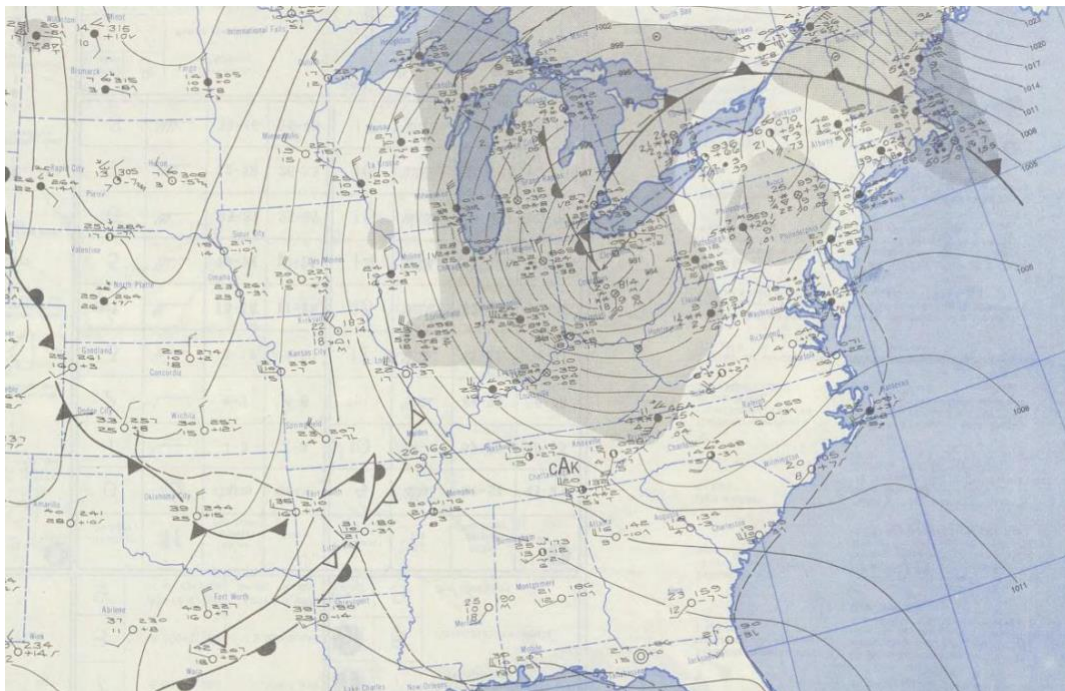


We're swiftly approaching Thanksgiving, and it's typical for this time of year as we flip to the winter season to start discussing snow around the major holidays! While it's undoubtedly a popular subject of discussion pertaining to Christmas, we decided to get into "the winter mood" early and discuss the top five major snowstorms that have transpired around or on Thanksgiving.

It's important to discuss this topic since Thanksgiving features the busiest traveling timeframe of the entire year. While it's not common at all, there are at times during certain past decades that snowstorms have brought standstills and significantly disrupted travel.

THE GREAT APPALACHIAN STORM

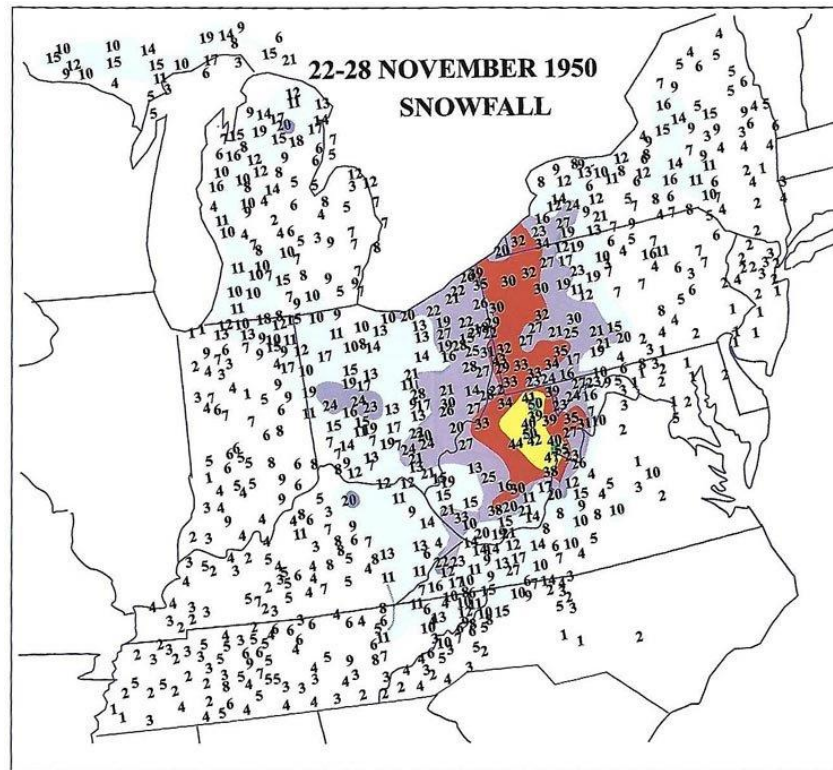
OF 1950



Beginning November 23rd, 1950, a powerful cold front swept southward from Canada and crossed toward the East Coast. As it did so, the leading edge of a potent upper-level low allowed for a low pressure to spawn just eastward of the Appalachians, where it materialized and strengthened as it trekked into the Ohio Valley. With a strong high pressure east of Maine, this resulted in the low pressure to rapidly strengthen, slow down, and filtered in cold air that eventually clashed with the precipitation. Due to the tightening pressure gradient, lots of warm

air surged northward up the East Coast while arctic air fell on the backside from the Great Lakes into the Ohio and windward side of the Appalachian Mountains.

Wind swept rain and damaging gusts were recorded from New Jersey to Maine, while heavy snow dumped from Michigan down to Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, and down into the Tennessee River Valley. Just over five feet fell across the Central Appalachians, especially across West Virginia. In fact, 63.2" is the record for Coburn Creek, WV and remains to this day. Over 30" fell across Western Pennsylvania, with as much as snowfall over 5" fell even down into Tennessee and Kentucky



Furthermore, flooding rains and coastal flooding impacted major metro areas from New Jersey to Connecticut, and even parts of Eastern Pennsylvania. Due to the intense pressure gradient, notable gusts were recorded: 110 mph in Concord, NH; 100 mph in Hartford, CT, and a 94 mph gusts in NYC. This storm to this present day is coined “Storm of the Century”.

THE 1971 THANKSGIVING

NOR'EASTER



On November 24th, 1971, a developing low pressure formed once again in the leeward side of the southern Appalachians. By the 25th, this low pressure had shifted off the Mid-Atlantic coast before eventually tracking up the East Coast to New England. With a fully developed

Nor'easter, significant snow had impacted states from Pennsylvania up to Eastern New York and into New England.

Several hundred individuals were stranded as this storm brought any type of transportation to a complete standstill. In Scranton, PA, approximately two feet fell while 22.5" fell at Albany, NY setting the record for an all-time high for November. Places across the Catskills and Upper Hudson Valley saw near 30". In general, anywhere from 10" to 20" fell across much of the interior regions of New England. In fact, snow was able to make it as far south as Washington D.C. where they reported an inch of snow, making it officially a "white Thanksgiving". This snowstorm to this day goes down one of the greatest storms to ever hit during the month of November across the northern Mid-Atlantic and Northeast.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

BLIZZARD OF 1983

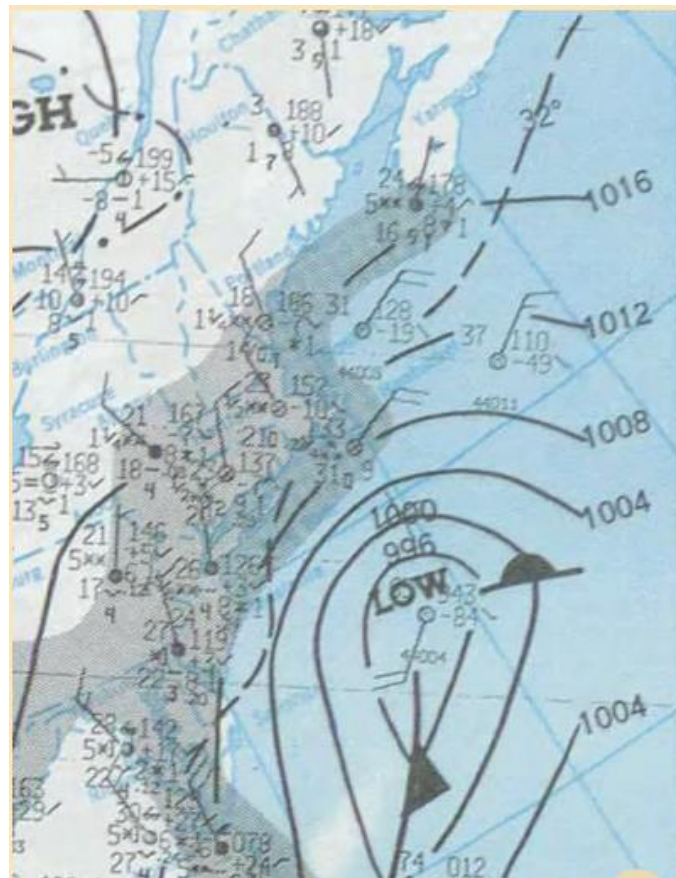


Imagine seeing snow cover on the ground for 63 days! This was caused by one of the most significant storms to blast the Mile-High city. On November 26th, immediately right after Thanksgiving, a significant low pressure traversed Denver, CO bringing snowfall that lasted into the 27th with its duration lasting over 30 hours. In that span, 21.5” of snow had blanketed Denver, all happening in exactly 37 hours. Furthermore, according to an excerpt from a newspaper coined “[*The Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph*](#)”, this storm produced snow drifts as high as 15 feet from the substantial amount of wind gusts and completely shutting down interstate 70!

Adding insult to injury, temperatures dropped into the teens allowing for snow to pile up efficiently and quickly in conjunction with gusts exceeding 35 mph. Every road and highway essentially were closed for two days, along with Stapleton Airport shut down for 24 hours after also receiving 22” of snow. With the immense amount of snowfall and long-lasting cold temperatures, snowfall was able to last just over 2 whole months there! With a storm that costed

around \$1.5 million in damage and lost business that entire weekend along with the impact that it had, it remains one of the most remarkable November storms to impact the West!

THE 1989 THANKSGIVING DAY **STORM**

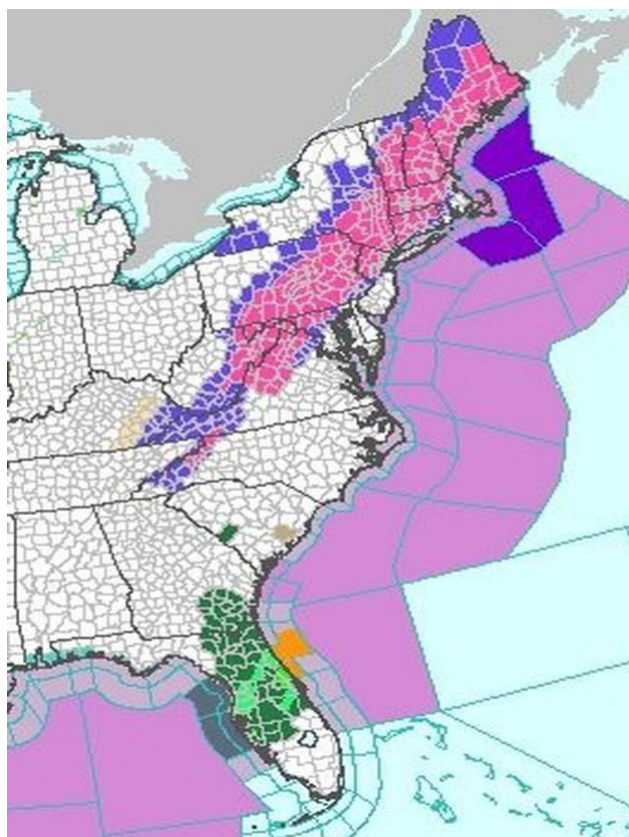


On November 22nd, a surface low pressure system developed across western Louisiana. Over the next 24 hours, this low began to strengthen by picking up moisture from the Gulf and shifted northeastward to the North Carolina coast before eventually tracking northward and ending up off the coast of New Jersey on the 23rd. This storm left a snow swath from Virginia up to New England. Snow was falling during the Macy's Thanksgiving parade as spectators were delighted by the magical flakes flying making it quite festive; however, the strong gusts caused several issues by hampering certain large balloons such as Bugs Bunny and Snoopy.

While not as impressive as the previous events discussed above, this system was known as “the one” that tricked forecasters. According to meteorologist [Walt Dragg](#), a National Weather Service employee at the time, stated that they expected the storm to track further south and had to play catch up with snow totals. In general, snow totals were anywhere between 4” to 8” from New Jersey to Maine, where over a foot fell across Cape Cod. New York City recorded 4.7” making it the first white Thanksgiving in over five decades, while Newark, NJ saw 6.0” setting the new personal record. Even Washington D.C. saw 1.9” of snow, making it to this day the snowiest Thanksgiving ever recorded!

THANKSGIVING WINTER STORM OF

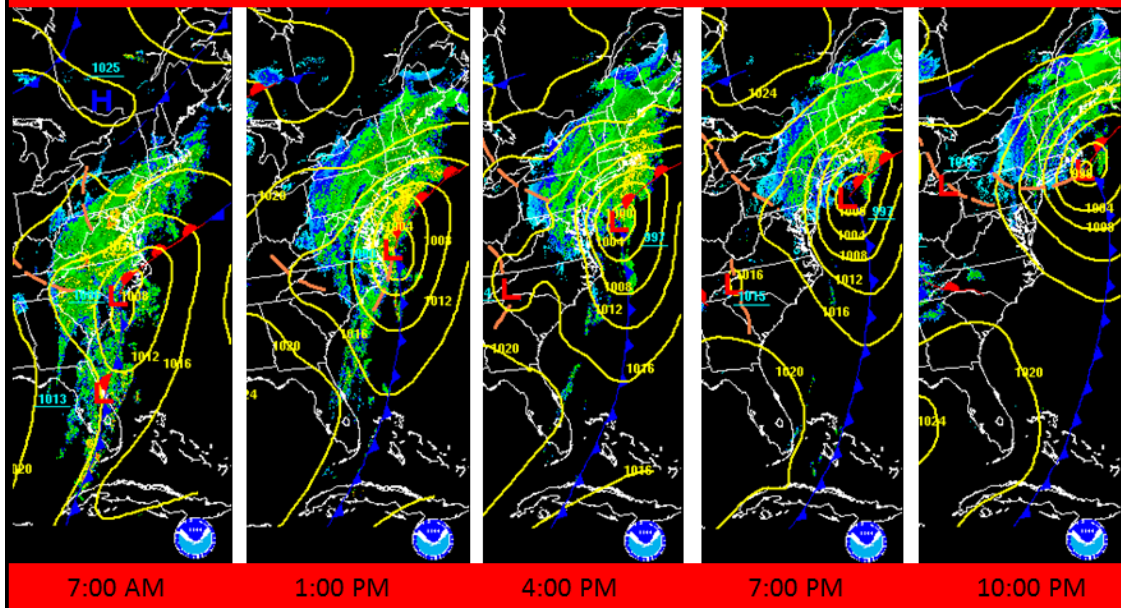
2014



One of the most current Thanksgiving events occurred leading up to the major holiday. On November 25th, a low pressure developed across Florida. Over the next day, it had tracked up the Eastern Seaboard developing into an early season Nor'easter bringing snowfall from West Virginia through eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and into New England. Winter storm warnings (pink) blanketed the entire Mid-Atlantic to Northeast regions.

In general, a swath of 6" to 12" of snow had fallen across the Northeast. The highest amounts recorded were places such as Monterrey, VA observing 14" of snow, while Albany to Binghamton saw just shy of a foot. This system brought 10.4" of snow to Albany's airport, making it the second snowiest Thanksgiving on record.

Radar and Surface Map Evolution on 26 November 2014



Unfortunately, there'd be over 300,000 customers that lost power from New Hampshire to Maine, over 4500 flight cancellations, and shy of 1000 delays. Adding insult to injury, power restoration took up to a week causing nightmares surrounding the major holiday.

In case you're wondering for this current Thanksgiving period, we're expecting to see a potent arctic air mass work its way down heading into Wednesday denoted by the cold front below ([WPC](#)). We're going to be watching a system develop along it bringing mostly rain from the Midwest to the East, along with what'll likely become the first notable lake effect event of the season by Thanksgiving and into the weekend. The greatest snow potential exists for places like the Great Lakes region and upstate New York, with windy conditions expected across these areas. Out west it'll remain dry, though chilly. In totality, there likely will be some delays leading

up to Thursday, so make preparations in case you're traveling! Happy Thanksgiving from us at The Weather Pros!

