

01/24/2016

Was That A Blizzard In Richmond?

Posted By Andrew Freiden 8:03am 1/24/2016

From around noon through 6pm it was snowing furiously across Metro Richmond. Check the radar loop:

Snow was coming down at 1-2" per hour in the heavier bands.

So: Was it a blizzard? Not quite. Here's why: The yellow text is National Weather Service "Blizzard" Criteria, the Pink is what happened in Richmond.



Other than winds being 10mph too light, it was REALLY close. We've been calling it a mini-blizzard. Thank goodness there wasn't much snow or ice stuck on Trees from Friday's storm. We seem to have avoided any major power outages.

01/22/2016

Friday, 1/22/2016 Snow reports coming in...

Posted by Andrew Freiden 8:32am 1/22/2016

The first wave of snow has begun...with much more on the way. Snow will be light to start but pick up in intensity around midday.

01/21/2016

Early AM UPDATE for WINTER STORM

Updated by Andrew and Megan

6:27am 1/23/2016

Low pressure continues to intensify along the coast, cold air at all levels of the atmosphere will push back into the area changing any wintry mix back over to snow. We'll see periods of snow throughout the day on today and that snow will be accompanied by strong, gusty winds. NNW winds will range from 15-30 mph with gusts over 35 mph at times. Closer to the Bay and Atlantic Coast, gusts could occasionally top 50 mph.

Here are amounts of additional snowfall expected around the region



Please avoid traveling tonight and tomorrow if at all possible. We will continue to monitor this storm very closely and keep you updated!

Posted on 01/21/2016 at 07:18 PM | Permalink

01/19/2016

Models compete for how much snow

The computer models are battling it out for how much snow could tally up from the Friday-Saturday winter storm. The European model has been showing a very cold solution, with much more snow for central Virginia, although the GFS model is no slouch, also predicting significant snowfall. The big difference is track and strength, which ultimately leads to differences in upper-level warming that will likely induce some changeover from snow to sleet and freezing rain for the Richmond area. The Euro shows less of this than the GFS, which is a tad warmer overall. Regardless, the reality will probably end up falling somewhere in between, but this "battle-royale" will be interesting to trend-track over the next couple of days!



The GFS model, while trending a bit colder, is the warmer of the two models. Heaviest snow would accumulate west and northwest of RVA, though our fair share would also be likely in the metro area. Ice on top of snow could pose additional issues.



The Euro model shows those areas in bright purple hitting the jackpot for heaviest snow totals. We'll see.

Remember, these are just the model outputs as of today (Tuesday) and will most likely change quite a bit over the next day or two. Stay tuned to NBC12 on TV and online for the latest updates. -Jim

Posted on 01/19/2016 at 08:33 PM | [Permalink](#)

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Major Winter Storm Confidence Growing

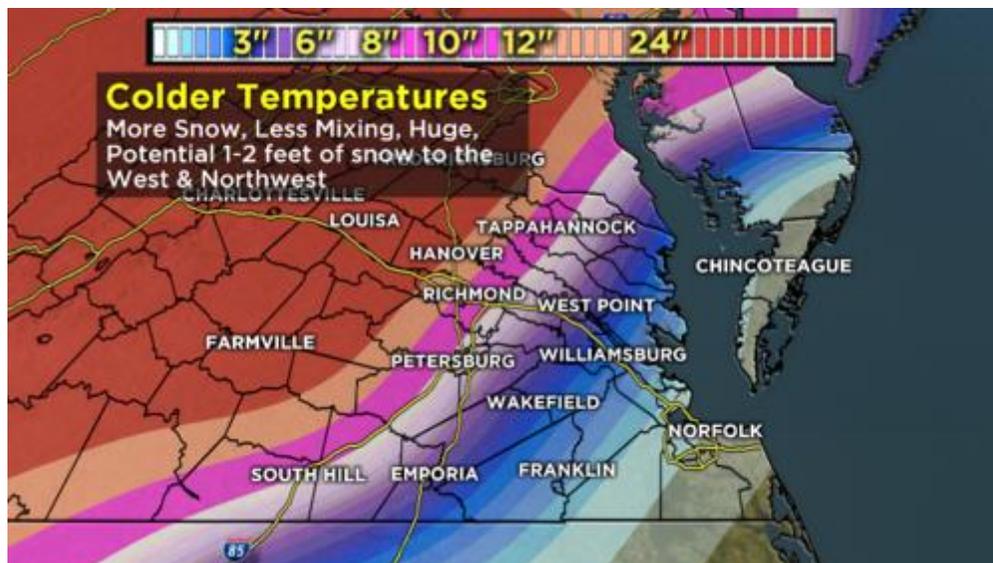
Written by Meteorologist Ros Runner (12:45 PM, 1/19/2016)

There is no doubt that a major winter storm is going to be targeting Virginia later this week. Precipitation probabilities are at 100% for Friday and remaining very high into the day Saturday. Unlike other systems that we have seen so far this season, this one will be a slower mover. It is going to bring with it huge amounts of precipitation, and there will be plenty of cold air available.

As is typical in many winter storms here in Virginia, the I-95 corridor is where uncertainty is often the greatest....and this storm will be no exception. The powerful storm will be tracking into our area from the south and hugging pretty close to the coast. This isn't usually an ideal track for a huge, all snow type of storm for Richmond. When the storm tracks closer to the coast, it does bring in some milder air in off the Atlantic at the surface

and aloft. Ground zero for that "battle ground" between the snow/mix/rain line is usually near the I-95 corridor and the City of Richmond.

In recent days, the European (ECMWF) forecast model has been very consistent in showing some big totals of snow over a good chunk of Virginia. Here is a look at last night's run of the European indicating 1-2 foot plus snow totals over much of the Virginia Piedmont, Shenandoah Valley, and northern Virginia into the Washington D.C. area. It also indicates some heavy totals around the Richmond metro, although the totals may be a bit inflated when you consider there should be some mixed precipitation involved closer to Richmond. Much lesser totals the farther east you go away from I-95 due to warmer temperatures.



The GFS (American) model has been a much warmer solution in recent days suggesting much more liquid versus frozen precipitation for metro Richmond. On the flip side, the GFS has said all along that this storm was going to be a big snow producer for the western and northern parts of the state. As of 12z this morning, the GFS has shown a SIGNIFICANT SHIFT toward the colder European model idea. It still indicates a high likelihood of mixed precipitation during the event here in metro Richmond with mostly snow not all that far to the north and west of the city. Here is the latest snowfall potential graphic from the GFS...keep in mind that while these totals do look much more robust for Richmond, there will be some mixed precipitation involved which could compact snowfall totals in the long run.



The Bottom Line: We are going to have a major winter storm on our hands with snow arriving before sunrise on Friday. We could see periods of heavy snow through a good bit of the day on Friday with metro Richmond eventually mixing with or changing over to sleet and perhaps even some rain. This would be particularly true to the south and east of the city. There will likely be a tight gradient of snow/sleet totals from the west end of the Richmond to the east end of the city.

We will continue to monitor model trends and will be issuing our first "SNOW FORECAST MAP" later today starting on NBC 12 at 5pm. Be prepared for a storm that will likely cause significant (if not impossible) travel beginning on Friday, through the day on Saturday and lingering into Sunday morning.

-Meteorologist Ros Runner

Posted on 01/19/2016 at 01:05 PM | [Permalink](#)

[Reblog \(0\)](#)

01/18/2016

Complex set-up for end of week storm

You've probably heard... there's the potential for a significant winter storm Friday into Saturday. While the general idea of a strong system looks pretty certain, the details are very much up for grabs at this point, and here's why. The main reason is that the energy that will sow the seeds for the storm is still located over the Pacific Ocean.



Since there is less good data available from the oceanic versus land sources, the computer models will not give us a sharper consensus on what will happen until about midweek, when the storm actually begins to form over the western U.S. For now there can be much fluctuation in model solutions. Regardless, all signs do point to a major storm. The details will have more to do with precipitation type, which of course can have a huge impact.



Another complicating factor will be how much warm air from offshore is entrained into the storm as it moves and develops near the mid-Atlantic coast. The Gulf Stream water temperatures are very warm, and if associated warm oceanic air is drawn strongly inland, then more rain than snow could occur, even over the Virginia Piedmont.

As you can see, the end result is not clear-cut, at least as of this writing. As the old cliché goes, stay-tuned!

Posted by Jim Duncan

Posted on 01/18/2016 at 06:48 PM | Permalink

Reblog (0)

01/17/2016

Major East Coast Storm Is Likely Friday & Saturday

NOTE, Ros posted this discussion last night.

<http://blogs.nbc12.com/weather/2016/01/forecast-1.html>

Written by Meteorologist Ros Runner (6:30 PM, 1/17/2016)

Sunday's first measureable snow in Richmond (officially 0.7" at the Airport) is the beginning of what could be a memorable week of wintry weather across all of Virginia. Now that the snow has come to an end, our attention turns to the bitter cold, arctic air that will be arriving overnight into the day on Monday. Once temperatures go below freezing tonight, they are not expected to go back above the freezing mark until sometime on Wednesday. Daytime highs both Monday and Tuesday will be in the 20s. When you factor in a gusty west to northwest wind, wind chills will frequently dip into the teens. Overnight lows both Monday night and Tuesday night will plunge well down into the teens with single digit wind chills possible. Be prepared to bundle up and make sure your pets are protected!

As the bitter cold air begins to moderate, we'll be watching energy coming out of the Rocky Mountain states into the Eastern U.S. This will ultimately allow for the development of a big storm system over the south on Thursday night into the day on Friday. This storm appears likely to bring Virginia a heavy amount of precipitation. The type of precipitation that falls will be highly dependent upon the track of that storm. Scenario #1 would be a more inland track near the Norfolk area and up the Chesapeake Bay. That would ensure a good bit of warm air being drawn into central Virginia off the Atlantic Ocean and the result would be more liquid versus

frozen precipitation. Scenario #2 would be a track further to the south and then near or just east of Cape Hatteras, NC. That type of track would keep more of the cold air locked in and would result in much more of the frozen precipitation.....in fact, probably a lot more in the way of snow and perhaps some of that being a wintry mix.



We are obviously still several days away and the details of this forecast are likely to change to some degree. However, the graphic below illustrates the areas in Virginia that stand the best chance of seeing mostly snow out of this storm.....and from the looks at most of our available computer data, it will be A LOT OF IT! This includes areas out toward Charlottesville, western Virginia along the I-81 corridor up into the Shenandoah Valley, and into Northern Virginia including the Washington D.C. metro area.

For many of us in central Virginia, we will likely start off as snow or a wintry mix on Friday. As warmer air aloft and at the surface is drawn into the area from the south and east during the day, there will probably be a changeover to a wintry mix or even just plain ole rain. As the storm moves east of the Virginia coast and begins to move away, that rain or mix will change back over to snow later Friday night into Saturday. This will occur as colder air and more moisture wraps back around the western half of the slowly departing storm.

For much of southeastern Virginia and northeast NC, much of what falls out of this storm system will be in the form of rain. There may be some wrap

around moisture and cold air to produce some light snow in these areas during the day Saturday, particularly over southeastern Virginia.



Be aware that this is likely to be a HIGH IMPACT storm that has the potential to make travel difficult for a good portion of our region. We'll keep you updated on-air, online at nbc12.com, and through your mobile device.

Posted on 01/17/2016 at 07:11 PM
01/16/2016

A Winter Storm Next Week?

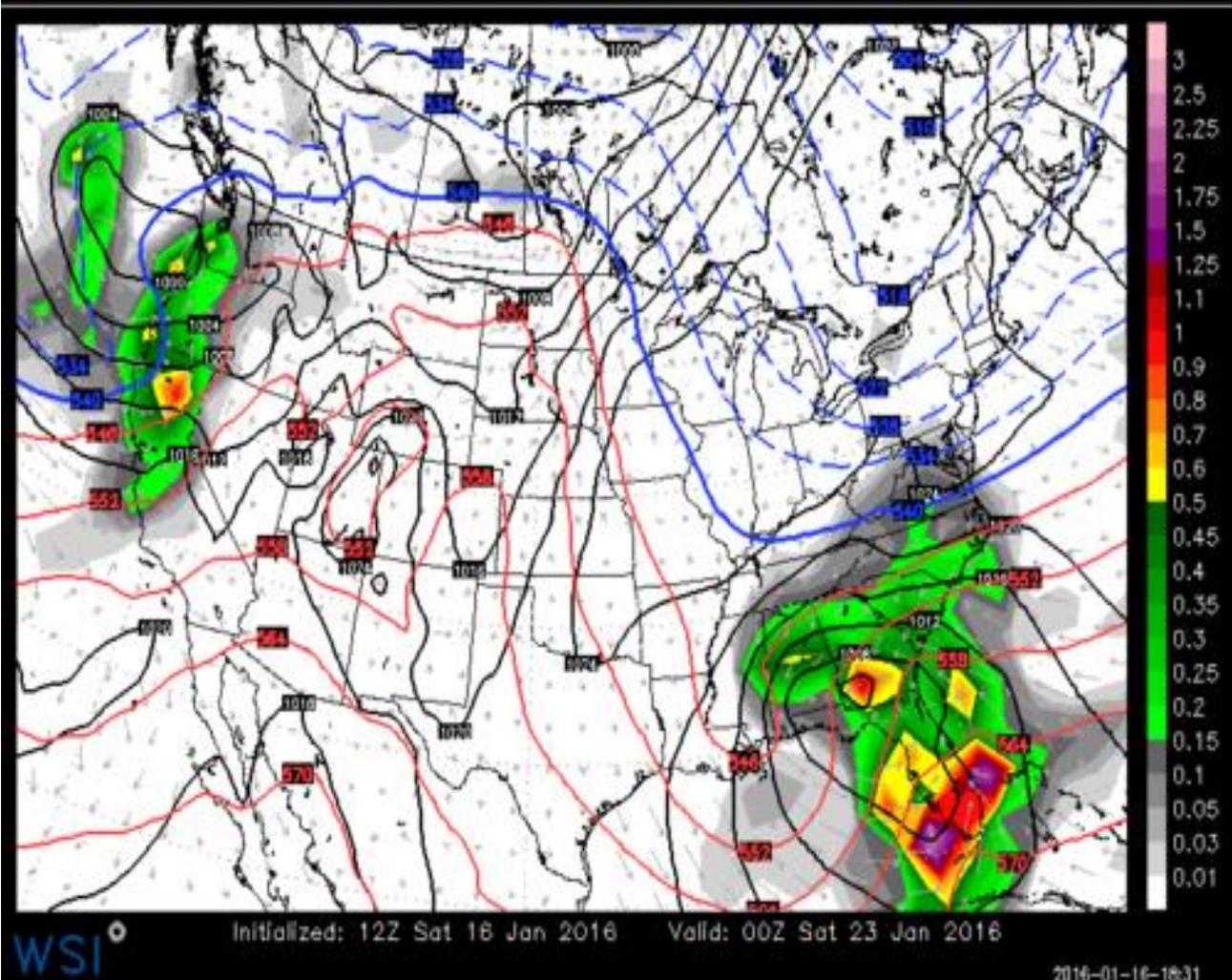
Created by Meteorologist Ros Runner (6:30 PM, 1/16/2016)

Behind this system, arctic air is slated to arrive Sunday night into the day Monday. Highs both Monday and Tuesday are not expected to get above the freezing mark. Lows Monday night into Tuesday morning should range from the low to mid-teens. Get ready to shiver!

Temperatures will start to warm up slightly by the end of next week. However, the cold air should linger just long enough to bring us the threat of a more significant winter storm by Friday. Below you'll note the European Model 12z run for next Friday it shows a cold center of high pressure to the north and moisture moving into the area from a storm to the south. Should this verify, a period of some snow or a wintry mix would be likely. That said, timing is critical. If the cold air should move out more quickly than expected or the storm slows down in any way, we may end up seeing more rain versus snow or ice.

ECMWF Operational – 156 hr forecast

6-hr PCP (in)/MSLP (mb)/Thick (dm)/10m V



The details of this storm system are likely to change between now and Friday, but we want you to be prepared for a storm that could be impactful to your travel plans starting Friday into the start of next weekend.