

## Snow (SN)

Precipitation of snow crystals, mostly branched in the form of six-pointed stars. It usually falls steadily for several hours or more. Qualifiers, such as occasional or intermittent, are used when a steady, prolonged (for several hours or more) fall is **not** expected. Like drizzle, its intensity is based on visibility. The following table shows snow intensity versus visibility:

Snow Intensity	Visibility
Light	> ½ mile
Moderate	¼ to ½ mile
Heavy	< ¼ mile

The amount of snow that falls is highly dependent upon temperature. For example, at 10°F, one inch of precipitation will produce 30" of snow. At 20°F, one inch of precipitation will produce 20" of snow. At 30°F, one inch of precipitation produces 10" of snow. At freezing, one inch precipitation will produce approximately 6" of snow.

## Snow Advisory

This product is issued by the National Weather Service when a low pressure system produces snow that may cause significant inconveniences, but do not meet warning criteria and if caution is not exercised could lead to life threatening situations. The advisory criteria varies from area to area.

## Snow and Blowing Snow Advisory

This product is issued by the National Weather Service during situations that cause significant inconveniences, but do not meet warning criteria and if caution is not exercised could lead to life threatening situations. The warning criteria in this definition varies from area to area.

## Snow Core

A sample of either freshly fallen snow, or the combined old and new snow on the ground. This is obtained by pushing a cylinder down through the snow layer and extracting it.

## Snow Density

The mass of snow per unit volume which is equal to the water content of the snow divided by its depth.

## Snow Depth

The combined total depth of both the old and new snow on the ground.

## Snow Flurries

They are intermittent light snowfalls of short duration (generally light snow showers) with no measurable accumulation.

## Snow Grains (SG)

Precipitation of very small, white, and opaque grains of ice. They can be distinguished from [ice pellets](#), because ice pellets bounce and snow grains do not bounce at all.

## Snow Pack

The combined layers of snow and ice on the ground at any one time. It is also called **snowcover**.

## Snow Pillow

An instrument used to measure snow water equivalents. Snow pillows typically have flat stainless steel surface areas. The pillow below this flat surface is filled with antifreeze solution and the pressure in the pillow is related to the water-equivalent depth of the snow on the platform. One great advantage of snow pillows over a snow survey is the frequency of observations, which can be as high as twice per day.

**Snow Pellets (GS)**

Precipitation of white, opaque grains of ice. The grains are round or sometimes conical. Diameters range from about 0.08" to 0.2" (2mm to 5 mm).

**Snow Shower (SHSN)**

It is a moderate snowfall of short duration. Some accumulation is possible.

**Snow Squalls (SQSN)**

They are intense, but limited duration, periods of moderate to heavy snowfall. They are accompanied by strong, gusty surface winds, and possibly lightning (generally moderate to heavy snow showers). Snow accumulations may be significant.

**Snow Stake**

A 1¾" square, semi-permanent stake, marked in inch increments to measure snow depth.

**Snow Stick**

A portable rod used to measure snow depth.

**Snow Water Equivalent**

The water content obtained from melting accumulated snow.

**Snowboard**

A flat, solid, white material, such as painted plywood, approximately two feet square, which is laid on the ground, or snow surface by weather observers to obtain more accurate measurements of snowfall and water content.

**Snowmelt Flooding**

Flooding caused primarily by the melting of snow.

**Snowpack**

The total snow and ice on the ground, including both the new snow and the previous snow and ice which has not melted.

**Blizzard**

A winter storm which produces the following conditions for at least 3 hours:

- Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater, and
- Considerable falling and/or blowing snow reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile.

**Blizzard Warning**

This product is issued by the National Weather Service when blizzard conditions are life threatening. The criteria for this warning varies from state to state.

**Blowing Snow (BLSA)**

Wind-driven sand that significantly reduces surface visibility to less than 7 miles.

**Source: NOAA**