

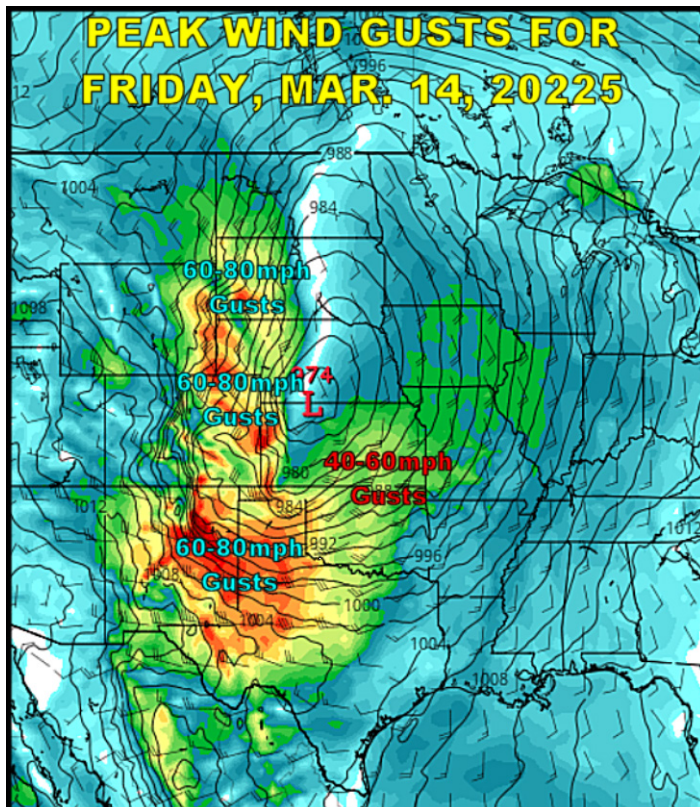
Central U.S. Windstorm To Raise More Dryness Concern

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, March 11 (World Weather Inc.) – *A very intense low pressure center expected to form over the central United States late this week and early in the weekend will have many impacts. A blizzard is expected in the northern Plains, southeastern Canada's Prairies and the upper Midwest as the storm center taps into cold air moving south from Canada while dragging warm and moist air northward from the southern states. The wind will also stir up dust and sand in the southwestern U.S. Plains reducing visibilities and removing volumes of lingering moisture from the topsoil in some hard red winter wheat areas. The wind will also threaten travel for high profile vehicles, induce power outages and produce property damage.*

The famed low pressure center has not evolved yet, but it has been give great attention and press leaving the event as no surprise to folks in the central United States later this week. The warmings are great and it will important that the forecast is taken serious because of the implications.

Travel in the northern Plains late Friday and Saturday will be seriously disrupted by the storm due to its heavy snow and blowing snow. Blizzard conditions should occur from parts of Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan into the eastern Dakotas and



Minnesota where snowfall of 4 to 10 inches and local amounts over 12 inches will be possible while wind speeds gust between 40 and 60 mph. Serious drifting of snow is expected along with whiteout conditions. Road closures are expected and some power outages are likely. Livestock stress will be very serious especially with temperatures falling from the 50s and 60s down to the teens and some single digits in just a couple of days.

Farther to the south, **wind speeds of 60 to 80 mph are predicted from parts of West Texas into eastern Colorado and western Kansas.** Greater gusts cannot be ruled out – at least not yet. The wind will blow from the west across the high Plains and every time that occurs the relative

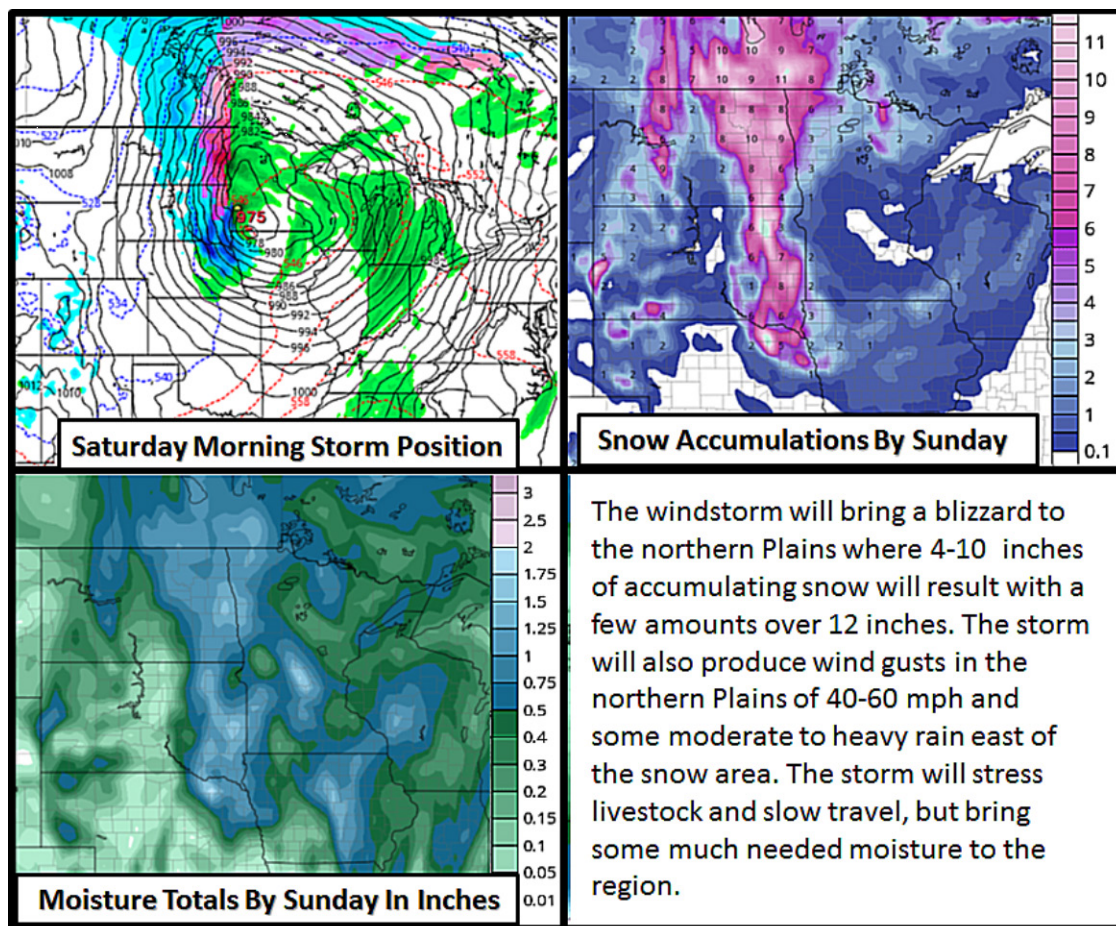
humidity drops to between 10% and 25% allowing for quick drying. Blowing dust and sand are expected as well in the southwestern Plains where it is still very dry. Little to no rain has fallen in recent weeks across western Texas and eastern New Mexico. Visibilities are expected to drop in these areas as well as in the northern Plains.

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The roaring wind, low humidity and blowing dust and sand could lead to some damage to vegetation including winter wheat. Some of the wheat crop has already been subjected to damaging temperatures and the crop needs wet and mild weather to set new tillers and improve root systems. A windstorm like that expected this week preceded by unusually warm temperatures and followed by some briefly colder weather then more heat is certainly not going to be good for the already struggling crop. If changes do not bring rain and milder temperatures to the region soon the crop will be further reduced in its production potential.

Excessive wind will also create power outages in the central and southwestern Plains and some of the speeds will be great enough that high profile vehicles could be blown off the roadways and possibly flipped over.

The wind will only last a couple of days, but its effects could last longer depending on whether it rains or not in the central Plains. Dry soil may lead to more dust and wild temperature swings could lead to more heaving topsoil breaking root systems and raising the potential for more crop damage.



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