

Know Your Winter Storm Definitions

The State College National Weather Service office will issue advisories and warnings for situations where the following is expected. Before you hit the road this winter, know the NOAA definitions for these winter storm hazards:

- **Snow Advisory**—2 - 4 inches of accumulating snow expected
- **Blowing Snow Advisory**—snow expected to reduce visibility to 1/4 mile or less with winds of 25 - 34 mph and a duration of three hours
- **Freezing Rain/Drizzle Advisory**—rain freezes when it hits the ground, coating roads, walkways, trees and power lines. Accumulation expected to present safety hazard for motorists.
- **Sleet Advisory**—turns to ice pellets before it hits the ground; issued for accumulating sleet of 1/4 to one inch. Usually occurs with other types of precipitation, therefore, a Winter Weather Advisory will almost always be issued.
- **Winter Weather Advisory**—more than one winter weather hazard is present but all precipitation expected to remain below warning criteria
- **Winter Storm Warning**—more than one hazard is present and one of the warning criteria is met; for example; if five inches of snow were expected in 12 hours (as in a Heavy Snow Warning), with some sleet mixed in
- **Blizzard Warning**—Sustained wind or frequent gusts greater than or equal to 35 mph accompanied by falling and/or blowing snow and reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile for three hours or more
- **Wintry Mix**—freezing rain, sleet, snow and ice

