

California poised to see driest January on record

By Kurtis Alexander

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Photo: Brant Ward, The Chronicle

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Several families employed tents for their visit to East Beach. Thousands flocked to San Francisco beaches Sunday January 25, 2015. At East Beach near Crissy Field many admitted it was colder than weather reports indicated.

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Robyn deBlaauw watches large waves break from a safe distance in Pacifica, Calif. on Friday, Jan. 23, 2015. The National Weather Service has issued a high surf advisory from the Sonoma County coastline south to Big Sur.

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While New York prepared Monday for a historic blizzard, California continued to court the record books due to a lack of precipitation. With just a few days left in the month, January is on track to be the driest on record across much of the state.

San Francisco has received no rain this month. San Jose has seen a scant 0.02 inches. Sacramento has had 0.01 inches.

Forecasters are calling for a 20 to 30 percent chance of showers Tuesday, but with the odds so small — and potential rain expected to be light — many places are likely to set records.

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In most spots, including San Francisco, the driest January to date was the one last year, the third year of the state's crippling drought. San Francisco saw 0.06 inches of rain in January 2014.

The same weather system prompting the dry spell in California, often called the Ridiculously Resilient Ridge, is also responsible for the pending blizzard in the Northeast.

The mass of high-pressure air sitting over the Pacific Ocean not only has blocked storms from hitting California this year — and the past three — but pushed those storms north toward the arctic and back down to New England.

The [National Weather Service](#) expects two to three feet of snow to drop Monday and Tuesday in places between northern New Jersey and southern Maine. A blizzard warning was in effect across a 250-mile stretch of the Northeast.

Bay Area temperatures Monday were expected to approach 70.

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