COLDER TEMPERATURES ANTICIPATED THIS WEEKEND ACROSS MUCH OF NORTHERN FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE - State officials are urging residents and visitors in Northern Florida to prepare for temperatures near or below the freezing mark across much of the Florida Panhandle, Big Bend and Nature Coast. Temperatures could reach as low as the mid to upper 20s away from the coast.

“Residents and visitors to the state are encouraged to prepare for this anticipated long stretch of cold winter temperatures,” said Meteorologist Amy Godsey. “Even colder nighttime temperatures are expected early next week.”

Durations of freezing temperatures will range from 5-7 hours inland and 2-4 hours near the coast. Freeze Warnings will likely be issued for a large portion of North Florida. Freezing temperatures are not expected across Central and South Florida, but some inland locations could experience low temperatures in the mid-30s each night. In addition, the combination of colder temperatures and north winds could produce cold wind chill values in the low and mid 30s as far south as Lake Okeechobee each morning. Wind Chill Advisories may be issued throughout the weekend for some of these areas.

North Floridians should remember the "Five P's" of cold weather safety. The “5 P’s” are: Protecting People, Protecting Plants, Protecting Pets, Protecting Exposed Pipes, and Practicing Fire Safety.

The following actions are important safety measures:

- Stay indoors and use safe heating sources.
- Be aware of the fire danger from space heaters and candles, keep such devices away from all flammable materials such as curtains and furniture, and install recommended smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Indoors: Do not use charcoal or other fuel-burning devices, such as grills that produce carbon monoxide. Install at least one carbon monoxide detector per floor in your home.
- Outdoors: Stay dry and in wind-protected areas.
- Wear multiple layers of loose-fitting, warm clothing.
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org. All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: www.KidsGetAPlan.com. And for the latest situation and flash reports go to: www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT.

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