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December 2012 - Pennsylvania Weather Recap

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The month of December began with remarkably warm readings across the state along with scattered rain showers from the 1st through the 4th. Some areas had daily average temperatures 20-30 degrees above normal during this period. A cold front swept through the region on the 5th bringing temperatures back to near seasonal levels.

Mild air did not stay away for long; however, as temperatures quickly rebounded as a result of a high pressure residing over the Southeast that produced a southwesterly flow across the Commonwealth. A slow-moving frontal boundary brought mostly rain showers for Pennsylvania from the 7th through the 11th. High pressure built into the region on the 12th through the middle of the month, resulting in dry conditions and seasonal temperatures. The final surge of very mild air in 2012 began on the 16th and kept daily average temperatures 10-20 degrees above normal through the 20th of the month.

A vigorous low and associated cold front traversed the Great Plains and moved into the Mid-Atlantic region on the 21st, which cooled temperatures back down to near seasonal levels and brought some snow squalls to the northern and western mountains in its wake. Snow lovers hoping for a white Christmas in Pennsylvania were given an early gift as a weak low progressed just south of the region on Christmas eve and brought a widespread 1-2" of snow for the majority of the state.

The last major weather story of 2012 was a Nor'easter that brought a plethora of precipitation types to the region on the 26th and created travel headaches for those heading home after the holiday. Most areas of Pennsylvania saw a mix of snow, sleet, and freezing rain while areas in eastern Pennsylvania and extreme southwestern Pennsylvania experienced mainly rain for the majority of the storm. Snowfall totals ranged from less than an inch in the southeastern part of the state to over a foot in the north-central mountains. A weaker low followed this storm a couple of days later on the 29th, which brought another widespread 2-4" for much of the state with some mountainous regions in southwestern Pennsylvania seeing nearly 6" from this disturbance. Windy conditions that followed produced areas of blowing and drifting snow. The year ended with tranquil weather and seasonal temperatures.