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# Mild start, messy finish to the winter?

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ARAM BOGHOSIAN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE/FILE

**Road salt was delivered last month to a city-owned lot on Frontage Road. Meteorologists say that long-term forecasts call for a mild start to winter, but likely a messy finish.**

**By Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF OCTOBER 07, 2015

Weather forecasters say the start of winter in our region will be milder than usual, but they are still expecting that the mercury will drop and flakes will fly in the latter part of the season.

“We will have our chances for snow and even significant snow, and we think that will be more prevalent the latter part of the winter,” said Bob Smerbeck, senior meteorologist at AccuWeather.com, which on Wednesday issued another in a series of periodic winter previews.

Temperatures during the start of winter should be above average.

“It will be mild — maybe noticeably mild — for December,” Smerbeck said.

The weather will cool, but temperatures will remain slightly above normal in January.

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## ‘Gem of a day’ expected for Boston

A chilly morning will give way to sunny skies helping to push temperatures into the 70s.

Forecasters expect there will be more precipitation than usual throughout the season, but warmer temperature will mean more rain, instead of snow — at least for the first couple of months.

Similar to last year, February is likely to be the coldest month and Southern New England’s best chance for significant snowfall. There may even be some cold snaps and snowstorms in March.

However, meteorologists don’t expect it will be as frigid or snowy as last year.

“We don’t see the extreme snowfall you saw last winter,”

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Smerbeck said. “We just don’t see it.”

“We don’t figure it will be brutally and relentlessly cold like it was last winter,” he added. “That was just crazy. . . . Even if these cold shots do come in this winter, there should be breaks where it gets warmer,” allowing for rain and melting of any snow cover.

By winter’s end, Boston-area residents can expect to have endured slightly above-average winter temperatures and shoveled roughly average seasonal snowfall — “maybe just a hair below average,” said Smerbeck.

In Boston, the average winter comes with about 43 inches of snow.

Worcester also should see average snowfall this coming winter. Areas north and west of Worcester, particularly at higher elevations, can expect snowfall somewhat above seasonal averages.

Last year, 110.6 inches of snow — including 64.8 inches in February — fell on Boston, according to the National Weather Service. The snow left residents traumatized by ice dam problems, endless commutes, backbreaking shoveling, and cabin fever.

“February of 2015 went down in the record books as the second-coldest February on record for both the region and for eight states individually, including Pennsylvania, New York, and all six New England states,” AccuWeather.com said.

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Step Guide



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*‘We don’t see the extreme snowfall you saw last winter . . . Even if these cold shots do come in this winter, there should be breaks where it gets warmer,’ allowing for melting.*

Bob Smerbeck, AccuWeather.com senior meteorologist

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