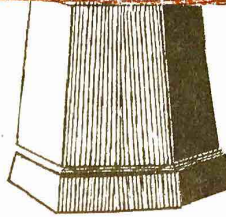


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October 14, 2009

## Meteorologist sees warmer, drier winter ... maybe

BY LEEANN NEAL  
*Headlight Herald*

Despite this week's wet, blustery storm system, the winter may be drier and warmer than usual in Tillamook County. So says Tyree Wilde, warning coordination meteorologist with the Portland National Weather Service office. "We're in a weak El Niño phase," said Wilde. "Typically in the Pacific Northwest, that means we'll be a bit warmer than normal and a little bit drier than normal." Wilde spoke to those charged with responding to medical

For this week's weather  
forecast, see Page A7

and structural emergencies in Tillamook County during a Tillamook County Incident Command Team Winter Preparedness meeting Oct. 8 at the Tillamook County 9-1-1 Center. In determining the winter weather outlook for 2009 and 2010, said Wilde, meteorologists as usual considered equatorial

Pacific sea surface temperatures. When those temperatures are warmer than usual, they call it an El Niño phase; when they are cooler, it's a La Niña phase. When sea surface temperatures are normal, meteorologists call it a neutral phase. "We just came out of a La Niña phase that lasted a couple of years," said Wilde. That brought us the worst windstorm in recent memory, in December 2007. It also covered the county in snow and ice several times last winter. "You did get a lot of snow and ice here last year," he said.

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"It's not common, but you do get it." Last winter also saw plenty of flooding in Tillamook County, said Wilde. "We had all that snow in December and we opened up the new year with a flood event. A week later, we had another flood event." So in predicting a warmer,

drier winter for the north coast, Wilde cautioned, "There are always exceptions." He pointed to the local flood of November 2006, which despite having occurred during an El Niño year, unleashed record rain on the region and set an all-time Oregon rainfall record of 14.3 inches in 24 hours at Lee's

Camp. "It's still considered the wettest spot in Oregon," he said. So how does Wilde's predictions measure up against the Old Farmer's Almanac? That venerable guide's long-range weather forecast for the Oregon coast pretty much parallels Wilde's. According to the Almanac,

winter temperatures and precipitation will be near normal, perhaps with some above-normal snowfall. Next summer, says the Almanac, will be drier than normal, with above-normal temperatures, the hottest periods occurring in late June and mid-July. Believe it or not.

