

24 January 2019

**Stormy weather to be expected over the eastern parts of South Africa on voter registration weekend: 25 - 27 January 2019**

With South Africa going into voter registration weekend, the eastern parts of the country can expect stormy weather as from Friday, 25 until Sunday, 27 January 2019. The affected provinces will be north-eastern Free State, western KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Storms in some of these areas may become severe, producing one or a combination of the following; large hail, abundance of small hail and heavy downpours which could lead to localised flooding and strong damaging winds. The risk for severe storms will be the highest over Mpumalanga Highveld and southern Limpopo on Friday, spreading west on Saturday.

Possible impacts from these expected conditions include road flooding resulting in travel disruptions and damage to infrastructure. It is thus recommended that extra caution should be taken when erecting temporary structures for voter registration purposes.

These extreme conditions will be the result of the presence of an upper air trough (extension of a low pressure) over the central parts of the country. This will be in combination with a ridge of a low-level high pressure system which will be positioned south-east of the country.

It will be much cooler over the eastern half of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Highveld of Mpumalanga on Saturday, with the cooler air expected to spread to Gauteng and Limpopo on Sunday. Elsewhere in the country, it will be sunny and hot over the central and western parts.

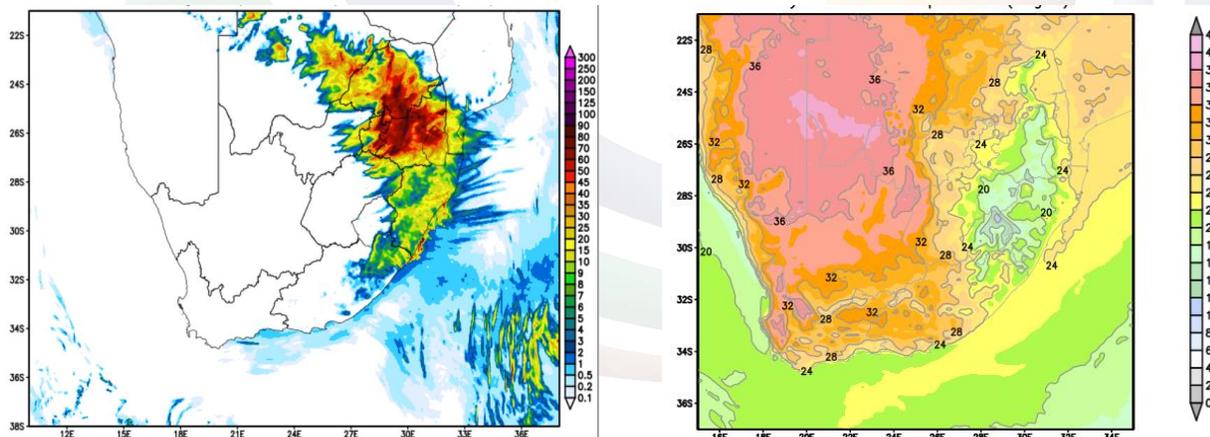


Figure 1: Predicted 24 hour accumulation of rainfall (left) as generated by the 4km Unified Model (UM) for Saturday, 26 January 2019 (©SAWS 2019) and (right) the expected maximum temperatures on Sunday, 27 January 2019 (©ECMWF).

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The South African Weather Service advises the public to take heed of the following precautionary measures when encountering flooding:

- If possible stay indoors and off the roads, avoid crossing rivers and swollen streams where water is above one's ankles.
- If trapped in a flooding situation whilst in a vehicle, it is preferable to abandon it and climb to higher ground.
- In buildings, move valuables to a safe place above the expected flood level. Switch off electricity at the supply point to the building.
- In rural areas, the safety of livestock can be assured by relocating them to a safe place on higher ground, preferably before the onset of inclement weather.
- In the event of duly authorized officials issuing an order to evacuate; abandon the dwelling without undue delay, unless access is cut off by rising floodwaters.
- **NEVER drive on a road that is flooded or obscured by water.** One cannot be certain how deep the water is and/or if the road has been eroded or washed away. If the vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is difficult to identify flood hazards. Listen attentively to the radio or watch TV weather bulletins for warnings and obey the instructions from Disaster Management officials.

The South African Weather Service will continue to monitor any further developments relating to this weather system and will issue subsequent updates as required. Furthermore, the public are urged and encouraged to regularly follow weather forecasts on television and radio.

Updated information in this regard will regularly be available at [www.weathersa.co.za](http://www.weathersa.co.za) as well as via the SA Weather Service Twitter account @SAWeatherServic

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