

Monday, 31 August 2026

CUT-OFF LOW TO BRING COLD, WET AND WINDY CONDITIONS, WITH POSSIBLE SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS OVER PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) advises the public of an evolving weather pattern expected to affect large parts of the country during the coming week. On Thursday, 3 September 2026, a cut-off low-pressure system is expected to develop over the western interior, resulting in a significant change in weather conditions across several provinces.

Western and Northern Cape to be affected first

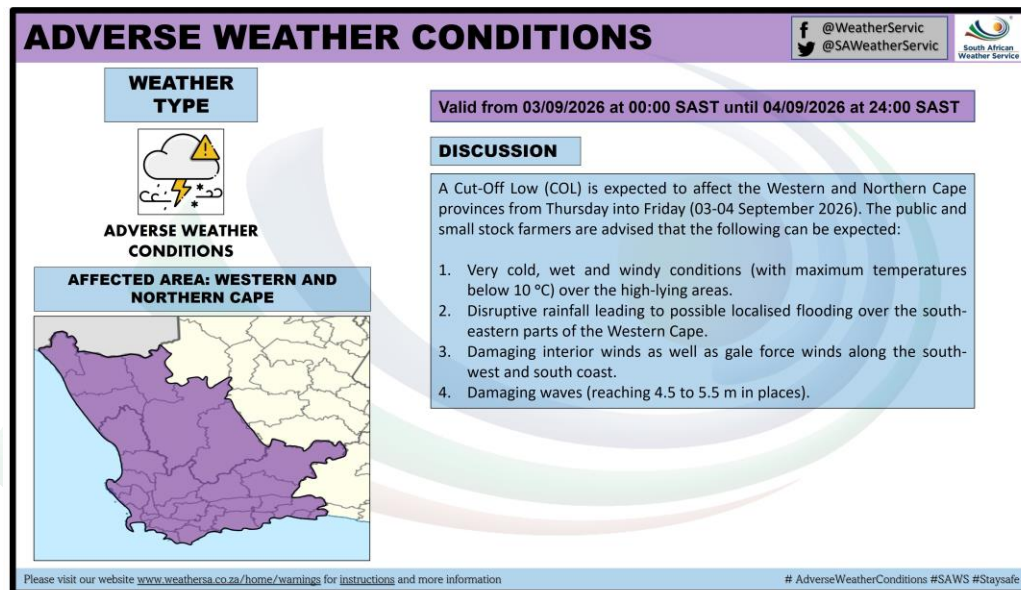


Figure 1: Expected adverse weather conditions on 3 and 4 September 2026

Cold, wet and windy conditions are expected to affect parts of the Western Cape and Northern Cape from Thursday into Friday (3 – 4 September 2026), as illustrated by Figure 1 above. Very cold conditions are possible over the high-lying areas, where maximum temperatures may remain below 10°C in places. Rainfall over parts of the Western Cape may become disruptive and could lead to localised flooding, particularly over the south-eastern parts of the province.

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Strong to damaging interior winds are also possible, while gale-force winds may affect the south-western and southern coastal areas. Damaging waves, reaching approximately 4,5 to 5,5 metres in places, may also pose a risk to coastal activities and infrastructure.

Current Weather Warnings: (A low likelihood of significant weather warnings are listed below)

- **Yellow level 4 warning: Disruptive rainfall** leading to flooding of roads and settlements, and major disruption of traffic flow are expected over the Overberg district, and the Garden Route districts (Western Cape) on Thursday (3 September 2026).
- **Yellow level 4 warning: Damaging wind** leading to damage to temporary structures, damage to settlement, injuries and danger to life from flying debris, transport routes and travel services affected by wind, is expected over the Namakwa district (N. Cape), parts of the Cape Winelands, Central Karoo districts and the Little Karoo municipality (W. Cape) on Thursday afternoon into Friday (3 to 4 September 2026).
- **Yellow level 4 warning: Damaging wind and waves** leading to disruption of ports/harbours, danger to navigation at sea are expected between Alexander Bay and Plettenburg Bay from Thursday to Friday (3 to 4 September 2026).

System to spread towards the central and eastern interior

As the cut-off low propagates eastwards during the course of the weekend, it is expected to bring a noticeable drop in temperatures, scattered to widespread showers and thundershowers, as well as windy conditions over parts of the Free State, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the eastern parts of the North West. These conditions are expected to persist from Friday into Sunday, with the potential for further impacts as the system progresses across the country.

Possibility of severe thunderstorms

There is a signal for severe thunderstorms to develop over parts of the Free State, North West and Gauteng from Friday afternoon into Saturday evening. The risk of severe thunderstorms is then expected to shift further eastwards, affecting parts of Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal from Sunday morning, with the possibility of extending into the southern parts of Limpopo.

Where severe thunderstorms occur, they may be accompanied by:

- Heavy downpours, which could result in localised flooding
- Strong and potentially damaging winds
- Excessive lightning and the possibility of hail.

The exact location and intensity of severe thunderstorms will depend on the evolution of the atmospheric system, and the public is encouraged to remain updated with the latest forecasts and warnings.

Possibility of snow over high-lying areas

There is also a possibility of snowfall over the Drakensberg Mountains of the Eastern Cape on Friday morning, extending into the high-lying areas of Lesotho.

Motorists travelling through high-lying mountain passes are advised to remain alert due to rapidly deteriorating weather conditions, including reduced visibility, cold temperatures and possible hazardous driving conditions.

Meteorological spring

As South Africa enters meteorological spring, which officially begins on 1 September, the public is reminded that this period marks an important transition in the country's seasonal weather patterns. Spring is typically characterised by increasingly variable weather conditions as winter circulation patterns begin to weaken and warmer conditions gradually become established. It is also a period during which cut-off low-pressure systems can occur more frequently, often resulting in significant and sometimes disruptive weather over parts of the country, including widespread rainfall, cold temperatures, strong winds and severe thunderstorms. The development of the current weather system is therefore occurring during a period of the year when rapidly changing and contrasting weather conditions are not uncommon.

ADVISORY

The public and small-stock farmers are advised to take the necessary precautions as the weather system moves across the country.

Members of the public are advised to:

- Remain alert to updated weather forecasts, advisories and warnings issued by the South African Weather Service.
- Avoid crossing flooded roads, bridges and streams.
- Exercise caution during periods of heavy rainfall, particularly in areas prone to flooding.
- Secure loose outdoor objects that may be displaced by strong winds.
- Avoid seeking shelter under isolated trees or near metal structures during thunderstorms.
- Exercise caution near the coast where strong winds and high waves are expected.
- Dress appropriately for cold conditions and take the necessary precautions to protect vulnerable individuals from exposure to cold weather.
- Small-stock farmers should ensure that livestock has adequate shelter, particularly in areas where very cold, wet and windy conditions are expected.
- Motorists travelling through mountainous and high-lying areas should remain alert for possible snowfall and rapidly changing road conditions.

The SAWS will continue to monitor the development and movement of this weather system and will issue weather warnings as the week progresses.

The public and stakeholders are strongly urged to monitor official SAWS forecasts and warnings continuously. The public is also advised to remain cautious of unauthorised or unverified information sources and refrain from distributing such information further. For regular updates, please visit <https://www.weathersa.co.za/> or follow SAWS official media channels.

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