

Monsoon Time in Arizona

While many people may think of Arizona as always sunny, its weather is far from boring! In most of the state, there are two distinct wet seasons. During winter, there tend to be gentle rains and snow

in the mountains. But starting around July, the summer MONSOON season arrives! Clouds build in the afternoons and often produce intense thunderstorms.

The word monsoon is used around the world. It is a seasonal weather pattern that occurs when the temperature of the air over the land is a lot hotter than the air over the ocean. The wind shifts, bringing monsoon thunderstorms.

During the monsoon, it can rain very hard in one location while only a few miles away the sun is shining. FLASH FLOODS occur when rain falls more quickly than it can soak into the ground. If you are hiking in a narrow canyon or crossing a normally dry wash this time of year, you can be in danger.

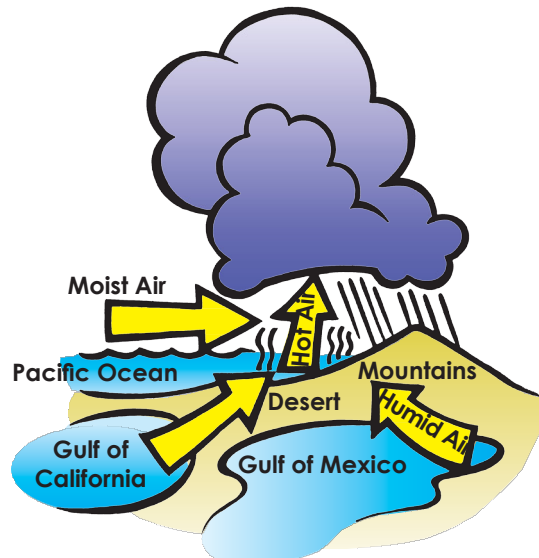
The National Weather Service helps keep people safe by issuing Severe Weather and Flash Flood Alerts (Warnings or Watches) on TV, radio, to the media or through texting for those who sign up for it. These alerts are issued for the areas that are affected, and people need to pay close attention to any instructions that are given.

Summer rains are essential for life in the desert.

For generations, native farmers have captured rainwater for their crops. People in cities “harvest” rainwater from their roofs for their gardens by catching it in rain barrels or cisterns.

When clouds build in the afternoon, people hope that the rain will come down to cool the air and make the desert bloom.

Even though we get monsoon storms this time of year, they may not bring us all the water we need. In fact, when monsoon rains come down in buckets, much of it runs off before it can be put to good use. Fortunately, we can rely on a consistent supply of water coming from the Colorado River via Central Arizona Project!



How Our Monsoons Work:

1. Extremely hot, dry air over the desert rises.
2. Cooler air rushes in from the south to take its place. It carries moisture that evaporated off the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of California and the Gulf of Mexico.
3. Big clouds (thunderheads) form, bringing drenching rain, thunder booms and brilliant flashes of lightning

More Ways to Learn About Water

Monsoon Word Scramble

Unscramble these words taken from the info above!

THO RAI _ _ _ _ _

RASHTEV _ _ _ _ _

MNOOOS _ _ _ _ _

GBI SDULOC _ _ _ _ _

GBI SDULOC _ _ _ _ _

HTUDNEREASDH _ _ _ _ _

SHLAF OOFLSD _ _ _ _ _

Central Arizona Project is a 336 mile long system of aqueducts, pumping plants, and pipelines which carries Colorado River water into central and southern Arizona.

