

WSI: More Cold Temperatures South and East in March/April, Moderating Temps in the Midwest

WSI and ESAI Expect Total March-May Natural Gas Usage To Increase 4% Year-Over-Year, Further Reducing Gas Inventories

Andover, MA, February 23, 2010 - [WSI \(Weather Services International\)](#) expects the upcoming period (March-May) to average cooler than normal in the southeastern half of the US, with warmer temperatures in much of the western and northern US, especially in March/April. The WSI seasonal outlooks reference a standard 30-year normal (1971-2000).

"After another month of widespread below-normal temperatures across the central and eastern US in February, we think the focus of the cold weather will shift southward and eastward in March, as an atmospheric ridge sets up in the western and central US " said Dr. Todd Crawford WSI chief meteorologist. "The primary drivers for our extreme winter pattern, specifically a strong, dateline-centered El Nino event and a stratospheric warming event, will both be on the wane as we head into March. The residual effects will likely linger into spring, however, with cold temperatures focused in the Southeast US and warm temperatures spreading from the western into the central US. For the March-May period as a whole, we are forecasting 1191 gas-weighted heating degree days, approximately 4% more than last year and about 2% less than the 1971-2000 mean."

In March, WSI predicts regional temperature anomalies as follows:

- Northeast - Colder than normal
- Southeast - Colder than normal
- N Central - Warmer than normal
- S Central - Colder than normal
- Northwest - Warmer than normal
- Southwest - Warmer than normal

According to Paul Flemming, Director of Power & Gas at ESAI, "The WSI March forecast is for colder-than-normal temperatures generally east of the Mississippi and warmer temperatures in the northern and western regions. Natural-gas demand is likely to be near normal as lower demand in the warmer western and northern regions offsets slightly stronger demand in the south and east. Power prices in the east will continue to be responsive to delivered gas prices, but lower loads in March will moderate prices." said Paul Flemming. "March marks the beginning of the maintenance season with nuclear refueling outages in many areas. Nuclear outages will add to late season gas demand as gas-fired generation makes up the difference."

In April, WSI sees the monthly breakdown as:

- Northeast - Colder than normal
- Southeast - Colder than normal
- N Central - Warmer than normal
- S Central - Colder than normal
- Northwest - Warmer than normal
- Southwest - Warmer than normal

"In April, WSI is forecasting generally cooler temperatures east of the Mississippi and significantly warmer-than-normal temperatures across the western regions. April represents shoulder-period gas demand as the heating season draws to a close. Cooler temperatures in

the Northeast will be slightly bullish for electric loads, but generator maintenance schedules will play a more bullish role in power markets than changes in weather patterns," according to Paul Flemming.

In May, WSI forecasts:

Northeast - Colder than normal
Southeast - Colder than normal
N Central - Warmer than normal
S Central - Warmer than normal
Northwest - Warmer than normal
Southwest - Warmer than normal

"In May, WSI is forecasting significantly warmer-than-normal temperatures across the western and central regions but generally cooler temperatures in the northeast and mid-Atlantic. In May, gas demand for heating will shift to early-season cooling which may be significant in the western regions. Cooler temperatures in the Northeast will dampen electric loads and generator maintenance schedules will continue to be an important factor," noted Flemming.

WSI, which provides customized weather information to energy traders, will issue its next seasonal outlook (for the April-June period) on March 23.

About WSI

WSI Corporation is the world's leading provider of weather-driven business solutions for professionals in the energy, agriculture, insurance, aviation, and media markets, and multiple federal and state government agencies. WSI is a member of The Weather Channel Companies and is headquartered in Andover, Massachusetts with offices in Birmingham, England. The Weather Channel Companies are owned by a consortium made up of NBC Universal and the private equity firms The Blackstone Group and Bain Capital. More information about WSI can be found at www.wsi.com.

About ESAI

Since its inception in 1984, Energy Security Analysis Inc. (ESAI) has been dedicated to monitoring, analyzing, and synthesizing information about world-wide energy markets. Tapping the talents of its senior-level staff, ESAI provides clients with unparalleled insight into where the markets have been and where they are headed. ESAI provides ongoing systematic analysis of energy prices in the oil, natural gas, and energy markets. For more information on ESAI