

California stormy but East begins to warm

by UPI

SAN FRANCISCO -- High winds and heavy rain hit the San Francisco-Sacramento area Friday while Southern California prepared for mudslides as the storm moved south. In the U.S. East, where temperatures have been at record lows from Maine to Florida, Accuweather.com predicted a quick rise. That could bring weekend flooding from melting snow in New England and New York state. In central California, some bridges and highways were closed because of high winds and debris. A tractor-trailer overturned on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge across San Francisco Bay, closing the eastbound lanes. Large trucks were banned from the westbound side as well. "Los Gatos has been blowing like crazy, gusting at almost 80 mph at one point," Charles Bell of the National Weather Service told the San Francisco Chronicle. "Today seems like one of those days when if you can stay home, it's recommended." In Southern California, recent forest fires have left many areas bare and vulnerable to flash flooding and mudslides. Forecasters reduced earlier rain predictions because the storm had temporarily stalled miles north, but warned that even a few inches could precipitate slides, the Orange County Register reported.

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