

Winter 2010



# Winter Weather Wonderland

## Where is the Snow?

Have you looked out the window and wondered, “Where is the snow in Spokane this year?” Remember last year and the year before that? Piles of the white stuff were everywhere. It was great for sledding, making a snowman and getting snow days off from school!

All the snow was great fun but maybe not so good for your parents or the adults who had to shovel and drive through it. We had over 90 inches of snow for each of the past two years – that is about 8 feet of snow!

This year, it is a different story. We have seen snow, but not very much. It has melted quickly in the rain and we have been left with a slushy, sloppy wet mess that sometimes has turned into ice.

Only a foot of snow has fallen in the Spokane area this year, so we have not seen much “snow play” around town. You will need to travel into the mountains to find enough snow to play in.

It is safe to say we usually see snow in Spokane during the winter. This is called our climate. Climate is an average of weather conditions over many years. But how much, when and where the snow will fall is a little tougher to figure out. We call this weather. Weather changes from week to week and year to year.

The weather pattern during the past two years had winter storms coming from the northwest with below freezing temperatures. This led to plenty of snow. This year the weather pattern switched and winter storms have been coming from the southwest with temperatures rising above freezing. This leads to valley rain and snow only in the mountains.

Moisture that falls to the earth is called precipitation. Winter precipitation can fall as snow, rain, sleet or

freezing rain. It all depends on the temperature. In the Spokane area, we receive most of our yearly precipitation during the winter months.

When precipitation falls as snow, it can take days, weeks or months for it to melt and soak into the ground. This is important for the mountains. As the snow melts, the water fills the streams and rivers. Snow melt also gives back moisture to our soil and to the aquifers. We get most of our water from aquifers in our area. Are you familiar with the main aquifer in this region? Go to [www.spokaneaquifer.org/aq.htm](http://www.spokaneaquifer.org/aq.htm) or search for “Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.”

The people that forecast the weather are called meteorologists. These weather scientists watch the clouds on satellites, the storms on radar and all the various temperatures in an area. These tools and observations help them predict what the weather will do in the future. This is called forecasting the weather.

The National Weather Service in Spokane is the agency responsible for forecasting the weather. In addition, it is responsible for providing winter storm and flood warnings for our region.

Television and radio stations use all this weather information for their broadcasts, which then reaches you at home.

To learn more about the weather and the National Weather Service, visit: [www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/).



National Weather Service Station in 2009

**THE ENVIROKIDS' WEB SITE and EMAIL:**

**[www.SpokaneEnviroKids.org](http://www.SpokaneEnviroKids.org) and [envirokids@gmail.com](mailto:envirokids@gmail.com)**

# Community Calendar

February, March, April...hands-on activities to look, feel and learn!

Friday, February 12, 11am to 3pm\*: Happy Valentine's Day Earth at Mobius

*Note: Normal admission charges apply.*

- Make recycled paper valentines
- Make particle catchers

**\*Earn 25 points! Just fill out the Envirokids' Club activity card and drop it in the basket at the front desk before you leave Mobius.**

Thurs-Sun, March 18-21, Big Horn Show--look for Envirokids' activities!

Saturday, April 10, 11am-2pm, Weather Day at Mobius. *Let's Go Fly A Kite!*

Saturday, April 17, Earth Day Downtown on Main Street

Saturday, April 24, 11am-2pm, Arbor Day at Finch Arboretum



## EnviroKids' Points and Prizes!

You can earn points by participating in EnviroKids' activities. Whether it's visiting the EnviroKids' booths at community events or completing the activities in one of our newsletters, you will earn points that you can redeem for a COOL EnviroKids' Club prize.

20 points	—	Recycled notebook
50 points	—	Recycled yo-yo or recycled piggy bank
100 points	—	Bird feeder or rain gauge
150 points	—	Weather radio (limited supply)
200 points	—	A live raptor presentation to your church, school or other group or a trip on the Spokane River with the Spokane River Forum!

Look at the mailing label on this newsletter. **You will see a number next to your name. That is the number of points you have earned so far.** Want to earn more? Start today and do the activity on the next page and send it in!

Here is an example of what the mailing address looks like, and where you can find your prize points number.

Suzy Que, **25**  
1010 Environmental Ave  
Spokane, WA, 99201

## Hey EnviroKids'... We Want You to Stay Involved!!

We have noticed that some of you have little or no points. To find out your total points, look at your mailing address label on the front of the newsletter. Your total will be right next to your name.

There are many opportunities to participate and learn more about the environment. Join in the fun and start earning more points!

To keep receiving our newsletters, you need to participate in at least one activity during the year (return a newsletter with completed activities, send in pictures of environmental things you've done, or attend an event).

**We hope to see you soon!**

### Weather Facts:

The average seasonal snowfall for Spokane is 46 inches.

Nearly every location in the United States has seen snowfall. Even southern Florida has seen a few snow flurries!

In Washington and Idaho, mountain snowpack contributes up to 75 percent of all year-round water supplies.

Snow appears white because sunlight is reflected off the snow's surface of tiny crystals (and visible light is white).

Yes, you can eat clean, white snow, but always avoid dirty snow. Snow in urban areas may contain pollutants that you shouldn't eat.

Forecasting snowfall is one of the more difficult challenges for meteorologists.

National Weather Service:  
[www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/otx/)

**If we get any more snow, you can still try to find animal tracks:**



And nearby:  
Mountain Caribou

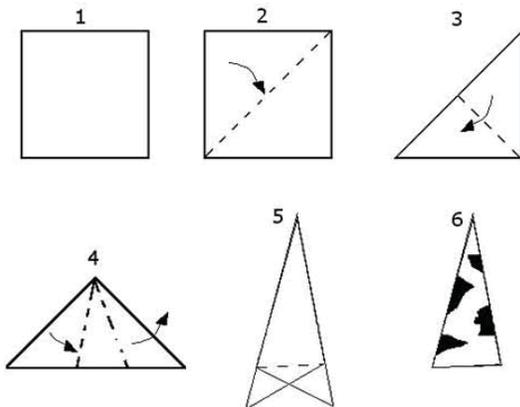
**FREE!**  
**2010 Spokane Recycles Calendars Are Still Available**

The "Go Green with Recycling" calendar features artwork from Spokane County students and includes recycling tips. Call the Recycling Hotline at 625-6800 to get your very own copy.

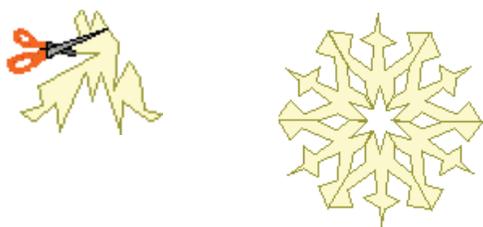
## Making Paper Snowflakes

~You will need a piece of paper and a pair of scissors.~

1. Real snowflakes all have six sides. So folding the paper into sixths is important. Start with a square sheet of paper. If the paper is not square (all sides are the same length), make it a square by cutting off the excess paper (see diagram 1).
2. First, fold the paper in half diagonally. (see diagram 2).
3. Fold the paper in half again, and then unfold so it is still a large triangle (see diagram 3).
4. Fold the large triangle into thirds (see diagram 4). Fold one side to the front and the other side to the back (see diagram 5).
5. Cut pieces of the paper away (see diagram 6).
6. Unfold your snowflake carefully so it doesn't rip.
7. Enjoy your snowflake!



Additional drawings to give you more ideas:



Last year in Spokane

## Winter Weather Word Find

Z	Y	O	Z	V	S	R	G	T	G
A	H	R	R	U	E	C	N	N	S
C	S	C	I	E	N	T	I	S	T
E	U	L	L	V	H	Z	N	H	O
S	L	A	E	I	E	T	R	O	R
E	S	T	N	E	M	R	A	V	M
A	R	E	R	W	T	A	W	E	R
E	R	F	O	O	N	D	T	L	W
S	E	W	R	N	I	A	R	E	E
M	H	E	E	S	I	R	R	H	R

CLIMATE	FREEZING
RAIN	RADAR
RIVER	SCIENTIST
SHOVEL	SLEET
SLUSHY	SNOW
STORM	WARNING
WEATHER	

15 pts!

**Celebrate Urban Birds!** [www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org](http://www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org)

Show how birds deal with winter weather and other daily threats to survival while in your neighborhood. Take a picture, write a poem or story, create artwork or a video...it's open to all ages and skill level! Go on-line to learn more. Prizes include binoculars, bird feeders, books, posters, calendars and more. **Deadline to enter: Feb. 15!**

**Send Envirokids' a copy of what you submitted and earn an additional 15 points!**



# EnviroKids' Club

EnviroKids' Club  
c/o National Weather Service  
2601 N. Rambo Rd.  
Spokane, WA 99224



**PRSRT STD**  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Spokane, WA  
Permit No. 722

**February 12th**  
**11 am - 3pm**  
**Come join us at**  
**MOBIUS for**  
**activities and fun!**  
(See calendar for details)

## EnviroKids'....caring for the Earth

EnviroKids' Club is a way for you to team up with other kids in Spokane County--exploring all aspects of the environment: air, water, weather, garbage & recycling, plants & animals, and even you & your environment.

EnviroKids' Club members will receive an activity in the mail four times a year (in the newsletters). Complete the activity (or activities) placed on the back of this page and return the page to the Club Headquarters (address and form is below). You will earn points towards a special prize. The EnviroKids' Club is for kids grades K-6, who live in Spokane County.

**Mail Completed Activities by May 14th to:**

EnviroKids' Club, c/o National Weather Service  
2601 N. Rambo Rd., Spokane, WA 99224

**Fill in this form and send back to us to earn your points! Do you also have a friend or sibling who would like to join the Envirokids' Club? Copy this page for them to send in and be added to our mailing list.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

My child has permission to participate in EnviroKids' Club activities and to have name/picture used in ads/website.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature and Date

EnviroKids' Club Partners:

National Weather Service, Spokane County Water Resources, Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, Spokane Regional Solid Waste System, Spokane River Forum, WA Department of Ecology and West Valley Outdoor Learning Center.

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*Printed on recycled paper*