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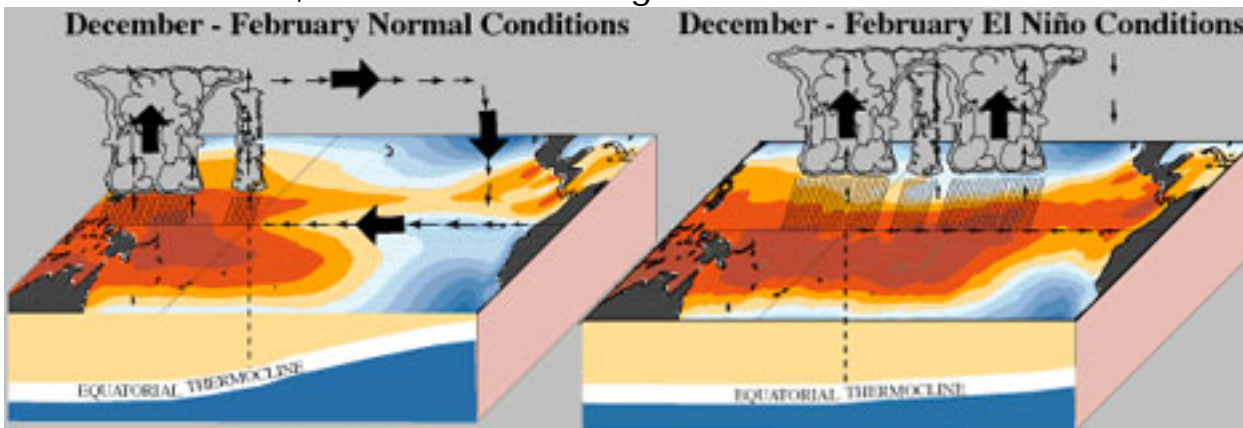
El Nino & La Nina

WKRG Channel 5
Tuesday, May 31, 2005

El Nino is Spanish for *The Child*. It's the name given to a major warming of the water in the eastern Pacific Ocean along the equator, off the coast of South America. The warming reaches a peak around Christmas and causes more wet weather in that region along with a shift in global weather patterns. El Nino is a normal part of the changes in weather and climate on Earth. El Nino does not happen every year but when it does happen, Pacific Ocean temperatures can be anywhere from two to ten degrees above average. While this may not seem like much, a major warming of Pacific Ocean water can cause changes worldwide.

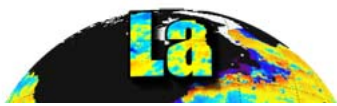
In some places the weather turns cooler, or wetter, while other places can become warmer, or drier. Strong El Ninos are associated with quieter hurricane seasons but El Nino does not totally stop hurricanes. It just means fewer are likely in the Atlantic. In fact, during the strong 1992 El Nino Hurricane Andrew made landfall as a category 5 in south Florida.

Many locations in the US do not see any changes but for every region that experiences stormier weather, there's another region that sees calmer weather.

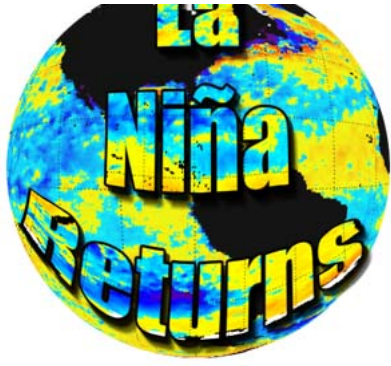


Meteorologists and Climatologists are still learning what types of weather shifts we can expect with an El Niño. What causes it is not totally

known. We can't yet predict an El Nino but we have a sense of what it does.



La Nina is the opposite of El Nino. La Nina is when the Pacific



Ocean water is much cooler than average. This also has an influence on worldwide weather. A strong La Nina means that the Atlantic hurricane season may be more active.

Here's the [latest status on El Nino or La Nina](#). You can find the **current El Nino/La Nina advisory** at the [Climate Prediction Center](#), and more information on El Nino at [Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies Library](#) at Florida State University.

Both El Nino and La Nina mean weather patterns will shift. Neither one is all bad or all good. It depends on where on Earth you live and what season you are concerned about.

This story can be found at: http://www.wkrg.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WKRG%2FMGArticle%2FKRG_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031770284521&path=!weather!education

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