Forecasters expect average snowfall

When leaves blanket the grass and heavy jackets are part of the morning routine, nature is showing signs of one thing.

Winter is just around the corner.

With the cold season approaching and Winter Weather Awareness Day this Thursday (Nov. 7) Gothenburg has a fairly average winter to look forward to, said meteorologist Michael Moritz of the National Weather Service in Hastings.

“We have a limited confidence in the predictability of good or bad conditions throughout the state,” Moritz said. “There is no strong atmospheric or oceanic signal that favors wet over dry and warm over cold this winter.”

Realistically, NWS officials can only predict a couple of weeks ahead meaning that a chance of cold weather and a lot of snow is still possible, Moritz said.

“Weather is fairly predictable and allows us to prepare,” Moritz said.

He said to be aware of upcoming weather when making travel plans or scheduling events. Make sure to fill propane tanks and do anything else that allows you to stay inside during a storm.

“I encourage people to watch or listen to local weather for trusted information,” Moritz said.

Moritz said that making a good decision during a storm is just as important as preparing for it.

“Most of us know what is smart and what we should do during a winter storm,” Moritz said. “If it’s a major storm, stay home or stay at work and let it pass.”

Gothenburg’s convenient access to Interstate 80, makes trips seems quick and easy.

Moritz seems to see it differently.

“Slow down when driving,” Moritz said. “Every year you see cars that slid off the road because drivers were going to fast for the winter conditions.”

While snow is cleared from roads, sometimes driveways or sidewalks take longer for snow removal.

Moritz suggests that people wait to shovel their driveways after the storm has passed.

“Physical labor in cold weather increases the risk of getting hypothermia,” Moritz said. “Elderly people should either ask for help or be asked if they need assistance.”

Moritz added that in small towns it’s a neighborly responsibility to check in on or give elderly neighbors a call after a storm.

Dawson County and Gothenburg are in the Hastings National Weather Service coverage area.

For questions regarding winter weather or upcoming storm updates, call forecasters in Hastings at 402-462-2127 or visit the NWS website at www.weather.gov.

abenson@gothenburgtimes.com

308-537-3636