

## El Niño Intensifies: Collection Systems Should Prepare Now

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center reports that El Niño, due to Pacific ocean warming, is strengthening rapidly and now assigns a greater than 90% probability of a very strong event during fall and winter 2026–27.

NOAA's September outlook also places the chance of a historically strong event, exceeding prior El Niño events in the record since 1950, at 75% for October–December 2026. From a time perspective, this El Niño event is expected to persist through May 2027.

El Niño does not guarantee a specific storm, overflow, or rainfall total at the local level. It does, however, raise the importance and value of having actionable system intelligence before severe weather and changing seasonal patterns test network capacity.



### Priority risks for collection-system and stormwater operators:

For wastewater and stormwater utilities, this El Niño is not just a climate headline; it is a live stress test of hydraulic capacity, monitoring coverage, and resilience.



Key challenges include:

- Heavy, short duration rainfall can overwhelm sewers, driving SSOs and CSOs and straining treatment capacity.
- Regulators and communities are paying closer attention to overflow events and climate readiness, raising reputational and compliance stakes for every storm.
- Successive storm events challenge staffing, cleaning schedules, pump capacity, treatment operations, and emergency-response coordination.
- Drier or hotter periods in some regions can contribute to soil movement, corrosion, odors, and concentrated wastewater; followed by abrupt wet-weather flow increases.
- Gaps in rainfall, level, and flow visibility delay field response or make it difficult to document the system's behavior during a high-consequence event.

### El Niño is coming whether utilities are ready or not.

#### ADS helps them see it, measure it, and learn from it.

By deploying focused monitoring now, utilities can capture how their systems behave under stress, reduce overflow risk in the near term, and build the data foundation for smarter long term rehabilitation and resilience programs. The most effective response is to monitor before the system is under stress. ADS helps utilities connect precipitation, level, and flow information so they can recognize changing conditions early, respond with greater confidence, and turn extreme-weather data into long-term planning intelligence.

ADS solutions that can help preparation and management of El Niño include:

- RAINALERT III™ captures site-specific, time-stamped rainfall and intensity data, enabling real-time rain alarms, storm-event analysis, I/I correlation, hydraulic modeling, and defensible rainfall records.
- ADS ECHO™ can extend level-monitoring coverage at priority locations, giving operators early indication of rising levels, surcharge conditions, and developing blockages.
- TRITON+® supports detailed flow monitoring for I/I investigations, capacity analysis, hydraulic-model calibration, and evaluation of system performance during wet-weather events.
- ADS PRISM™ brings data together in a single operational view, helping utilities compare rainfall response with observed levels and flows across their service area.

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**Contact ADS experts to discuss your concerns about El Niño and to explore specific proactive steps you can take now.** To arrange an appointment, email [adssales@idexcorp.com](mailto:adssales@idexcorp.com)