

Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Albany NY  
500 AM EST Wed Nov 4 2020

...Winter Weather Awareness Week Continues...

November 1 through November 7 is Winter Weather Awareness Week in New York and New England.

This message provides information on the hazards of freezing rain.

Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees and power lines, topple utility poles and communication towers, and disrupt communications and power for days while utility companies repair extensive damage. Small accumulations of ice can be extremely slippery for motorists and pedestrians. Bridges and overpasses are particularly dangerous because they freeze before other surfaces.

Freezing rain is the result of falling snow that encounters a layer of warm air which melts the snow changing it to rain. The rain then freezes as it encounters below freezing air at or near the ground creating a film or glaze of ice. For more information on how freezing rain forms please see: [https://www.weather.gov/jetstream/skewt\\_samples](https://www.weather.gov/jetstream/skewt_samples)

Most of eastern New York and western New England receives 20 to 30 hours of freezing rain each winter, usually for a few hours at a time. Prolonged periods of freezing rain or drizzle that last 12-24 hours or more are most problematic as accumulations of glaze on trees and wires may reach a half inch or more. Freezing rain accumulation associated with wind of 15 MPH or more is also dangerous as it increases the chances for damage to trees and wires with ice accumulation of less than one half inch.

The National Weather Service issues ice storm warnings for ice accumulations of half an inch or more on trees and wires and winter weather advisories for *any* ice accretion including a thin film of ice from freezing drizzle. We issue frequent updates and statements that follow up the issuance of watches, warnings or advisories.

A catastrophic ice storm struck eastern New York and much of New England on December 11 and 12, 2008. The storm paralyzed the region for days with up to 1.8 million people without power. Ice accumulation on trees and power lines was up to one inch. Other widespread damaging ice storms affected the Albany forecast area in February 1909, December 1929, December 1942, December 1948, January 1956 and December 1964.

Localized ice storms over small geographic areas occur more frequently. A Significant localized ice storm occurred in the Mohawk Valley, Southern Adirondacks and Lake George Saratoga Region February 7-8, 2017 and another in northern Dutchess County in March 2011.

Your Albany National Weather Service forecast office is available online and on social media. For weather and hydrologic information on the go, simply go to [weather.gov/xxxxx](http://weather.gov/xxxxx) where xxxxx is your zip code.

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