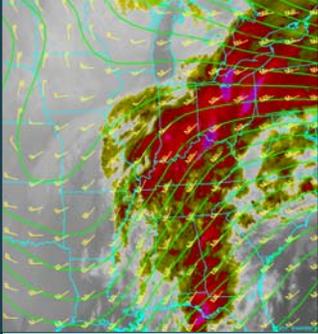


The 2003 Bluegrass Ice Storm

By late afternoon on February 15, a cold dreary rain changed to freezing rain as northeast winds brought in colder air from southern Ohio. Thus began the infamous Bluegrass Ice Storm of 2003. Freezing rain fell nearly continuously through the next morning as temperatures fell into the upper 20s. Hardest hit were the cities of Frankfort and Lexington, where ice accumulations approached 1 inch on exposed branches and sidewalks. Many trees were completely destroyed and many Bluegrass residents lost power for up to an entire week.



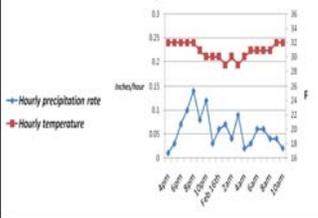
This infrared satellite image shows color-enhanced precipitation producing clouds over the Ohio Valley associated with a deep 500mb trough across Missouri and a strong jet stream over the Tennessee Valley.

Ice accretion at the base of the Lexington Airport ASOS wind sensor.



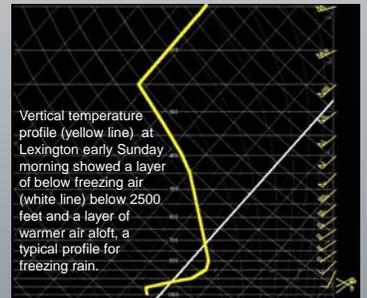
NWS Doppler radar image at 3 am Sunday, February 16 during the height of the ice storm. A surface observation from Lexington showed 30 degrees and freezing rain. Sleet was falling at Louisville, while snow blanketed southwestern Indiana.

Chart showing temperatures and freezing rain rates from late evening through the morning hours at the Lexington airport.



Storm totals

City	Precipitation totals	Type
Lexington	1.47 in	Freezing rain
Frankfort	0.91 in	Freezing rain
Louisville	0.55 in	Sleet and Freezing rain
Winchester	1.37 in	Freezing rain
Covington	0.15 in	Snow and freezing rain



Vertical temperature profile (yellow line) at Lexington early Sunday morning showed a layer of below freezing air (white line) below 2500 feet and a layer of warmer air aloft, a typical profile for freezing rain.



University of Kentucky

According to a report published by the Kentucky Public Services Commission, power was knocked out to 280,000 customers. 3109 power poles and 799 transformers were replaced. Estimated repair costs totaled 47.2 million among Kentucky Utilities and other utility companies combined.

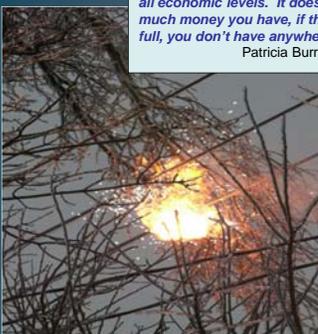


"Saturday night was very frightening. You could hear the trees groan - there'd be a snap and then a crash as the ice fell down, over and over again."

Jan Brucato - YMCA president

"This is a real disaster. It has affected everyone, from every area of town and from all economic levels. It doesn't matter how much money you have, if the hotels are full, you don't have anywhere to go."

Patricia Burr - Salvation Army



Courtesy of Bill Cruey