

MERCURY

DROPS TO 1

DEGREE

1-13-1950

No Relief From Near Zero Mark; Wind 75 Miles

Howling Northeaster Damages 1-13-1950
Anchored Planes at Airport; Many Stores
Close; No School Held in City, County

The Washington State Patrol at noon Friday asked all residents of the Seattle-Everett-Mount Vernon-Bellingham area not to use any public highways except in cases of extreme emergency.

"Blizzard conditions may prevail for the next 48 hours," a state patrol spokesman said from Seattle. Local W. S. P. men received authority for this announcement from Seattle.

Sliding temperatures and driving winds were making weather history in Whatcom county Friday, as Bellingham thermometers showed less red than at any time in years.

Gloomy residents took another, even worse beating from a relentless northeaster which got as high as 75 miles per hour in gusts, while the temperature flirted near the zero mark.

Lowest recording at the airport was 2.6 degrees at 2:40 a.

m., while the Soil Conservation station at the north city limits recorded 1 degree above at 8:30.

Portions of the city actually had subzero temperatures, with one report as low as 8 degrees below zero atop Sunset Heights.

The grimmiest aspect of the overall picture was the prospect of several days more of the same, with weather observers not looking for moderation until Tuesday.

AIRPORT BLASTED

Gusts of wind approaching hurricane proportions battered the airport, ripping wings off some light planes which had been tied down to ride the storm out. Several craft were damaged.

Power was off in buildings, all flights were canceled and personnel attempted to batten down to prevent damage from freezeups.

One spectacular landing was reported. Inland Airways selecting Bellingham field to come down at 11 a. m. A non-scheduled air service between Pasco and Seattle, the line's twin-engine Lockheed came down in 50-mile-an-hour wind.

Schools throughout the city and county continued closed Friday and most rural areas were isolated, with the only highway north to the border being U. S. 99. However, State Highways District Supervisor Everett Baxter predicted rotary snow plows would have the Guide Meridian open all the way Friday afternoon. Plows were also to attack drifts cutting off the Lynden-Sumas route, thus bringing Sumas back into contact with other cities.

All three railroads planned normal operations, although the Milwaukee expected to fight big snow drifts in attempting to get into Lynden. It anticipated no trouble on the Sumas run, though all railway communications were out.

Harbormaster Harry Lewis said all was quiet on the waterfront. Boat owners weren't even considering taking their vessels out.

WORST IN YEARS

Mount Baker lodge recorded 11 degrees below zero Friday, while Glacier was 3 degrees below and Shuksan 2 below. The week end wallop definitely put 1950 into the "hard winter" class, one that will "live in infamy." Old (Please Turn to Page 3 Column 4)

No Relief From Near Zero Mark; Wind 75 Miles

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timers were going back to 1893, 1911 and 1916 for comparison.

"I have never suffered so much from the cold as this time," said Mrs. Hallie Campbell, 910 Bancroft street, who came here in 1883.

Henry Cassils, amateur archivist of past weather and planetary prognosticator of future weather, said it got "a little bit colder in 1893, when the snow stayed on the ground for three weeks."

In 1911, the Nooksack river froze, he said, though it wasn't as bad inside the city as it is now. Another historic date was February 2, 1916, when two feet of snow fell in Bellingham, but the temperature didn't reach zero.

Cassils blamed it on the solar system, said we went into a seven-year cycle last June that we hadn't had for 84 years, and predicted another corker this December.

"All the big planets except Jupiter and Neptune are in retrograde—going backwards," he declared. "That's what's causing all the trouble."

Residents, accustomed to taking mild winters for granted, were wondering! This is the second straight year of unusually bitter winter weather.

BLIZZARD CONTINUES

The blizzard was continuing in the rural areas, though full reports were not available because of disrupted long distance communications. No calls got through to Sumas or Everson in the morning.

Acme was spared the worst part of the storm, the wind. Twelve inches of snow was on the ground and the temperature was sticking close to 4 degrees above zero.

Power, telephone and road crews were encountering hazardous and difficult conditions in attempting to restore utilities and roads disrupted by the storm. One telephone crew, headed by Walter Grant, head lineman, fought its way on foot four miles through the blizzard after its truck was buried in the snow.

Pacific Telephone Manager

Gerald W. Benedict also paid tribute to overworked switchboard girls who were handling 110,000 calls instead of the normal 74,000 daily load.

Some 450 known phone customers were out of service, with the Lake-way, Lake Whatcom, South Bellingham, Lake Samish and Chuckanut Drive districts hardest hit.

Excessive snow and wind caused the heavy wire damage, Benedict explained. Many power lines were down, too, in rural areas.

Emergency crews were sent here by the telephone company from other parts of the state, and out-of-town operators were being lodged in Bellingham. Linemen were putting in more than 12 hours daily.

Claude Manley, south end representative, was the only county commissioner able to get to the courthouse Friday. He said Lake Padden was freezing, Lake Samish had some ice and there was a slight rim of ice around Lake Whatcom.

Bellingham streets were comparatively deserted as many stores closed their doors and all persons who did come to work stayed inside if they could.

Winter's knockout blow apparently accomplished one good result Friday. City police received not one complaint of unlawful activity during the morning hours.

POWER OUTAGES CONTINUE

Puget Sound Power & Light's service department was harassed by continuing outages in areas where trucks could not penetrate due to snow drifts, as well as new troubles which were difficult to locate under present road conditions.

Though Seattle crews are helping and following County Engineer Ralph Knutzen's men on newly-cleared roads, the situation was described as bad. C. D. Olds, assistant superintendent for power and light, termed it one of the worst storm situations he had ever seen here.

The Everson district was one area with a power blackout.

Western Union telegraph traffic was going through, despite line and pole troubles, with messages being rerouted where needed. Sumas was unreachable by telegram, however, as well as by telephone.

FUEL AVAILABLE

Fuel dealers reported adequate

supplies of oil and coal, although no wood fuel was on hand for delivery Friday. Where power was out, furnaces using electric pumps were not in operation.

Besides the actual physical cold, mental distress regarding costly plumbing repairs, inability to keep the house warm enough for a baby and other problems were bothering householders.

Unluckiest of all were those who took tumbles which sent them to one of the two general hospitals. One broken leg was blamed on a sled accident, Dale Parker, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Parker, 62 Lake Whatcom boulevard, being taken to St. Luke's at 9:45 p. m. Thursday.

Other victims included three who fell earlier in the week. Dr. A. Paul Daugherty, First Christian church minister, fell a few steps from his 1218 High street home and broke his left arm above the wrist. He had been on his way to attend a Washington Council of Churches meeting in Seattle.

Mrs. Edythe Bentzen, 2303 D street, slipped on the basement of her home where ice had formed after a water pipe had broken. Her right wrist was broken in two places.

Barbara Shields, office secretary of the First Presbyterian church, fell at Myrtle and High streets while returning from Western Washington college. She broke her right arm in two places.