

Traffic Snarled By 'Silver Thaw'

Power Lines, Trees Snapped; Cars
Stalled in Western Washington, Oregon;
Rescuers Go to Aid of 50 Families 1-19-1950

(By the Associated Press)

A disruptive combination of snow, sleet and freezing rain snarled traffic and communications in the Pacific Northwest Thursday.

A "silver thaw" broke power lines and trees and stalled motorists in Western Washington and Oregon. Many schools were closed. Some rural residents were marooned.

The weather bureau at Seattle warned that the hazardous conditions would continue at least until Friday.

"There will be very little thawing in Western Washington in the next 24 hours," a forecaster said. "Even though it gets a little above freezing, there is so much snow and everything is so cold there won't be much melting."

A rescue party left Vancouver, Wash., to aid residents marooned in the snowbound Cape Horn area 25 miles east of Vancouver. The Washington state patrol reported some 50 families in the Cape Horn area were without communications.

Power and telephone company officials were looking for worse conditions, particularly in Northwestern Washington.

FEAR SLEET STORM

The Puget Sound Power & Light Company at Seattle reported a sleet storm appeared to be developing in Skagit and Whatcom counties, although the situation there is not yet critical.

Telephone company officials said that in addition to the Grays Harbor area, Neah Bay and Clallam and Astoria, Ore., are isolated by broken lines.

Some circuits between Tacoma and Longview and about 20 of 50 or 60 lines between Spokane and Walla Walla are broken.

Seattle-Tacoma airport and Boeing field, Seattle, were closed about 3 a. m. when freezing rain turned runways into icy ribbons.

Sixteen inches of snow fell during the night on Snoqualmie pass. It was drifting heavily because of a high wind. The Northwest Greyhound lines canceled its Seattle-Wenatchee trip via Stevens pass and rerouted the bus to Snoqualmie and Blewett passes.

Schools were closed in Seattle, Portland, Tacoma, Everett, Salem, and many other Western Washington and Oregon cities.

A mixture of snow, sleet and rain started Wednesday night and continued Thursday. New snow measured four to eight inches in Seattle. Long lines of automobiles were stalled on hills in the Seattle area. Thousands of workers were late reporting to their jobs.

ICE COVERS ROADS

Highways all over Western Washington and Oregon were sheathed in ice. The state patrol requested that no one drive unless trips were essential.

In Oregon, Gov. Douglas McKay ordered national guard armories prepared for possible sheltering of winter refugees.

In Eastern Washington and Oregon there was more snow and occasional freezing rain and sleet in the southern portions. The temperature in Spokane was expected to reach 10 to 15 above today, after

(Please Turn to Page 3 Column 4)