

Sydney pummelled by hail the size of tennis balls

December 21 2018



A series of lightning and hailstorms in Sydney has caused damage that is already running into the tens of millions of dollars

Australia's largest city was picking up the pieces Friday after a series of lightning and hailstorms pummelled cars with ice blocks the size of

tennis balls.

The authorities issued a severe storm warning, but that was not enough to prevent damage that is already running into the tens of millions of dollars.

"As of 6:30 am we are at 15,000 claims and AUS\$80 million (US\$57 million) in damages," the Insurance Council of Australia told AFP.

When the storms hit, Sydneysiders looked on in desperation as cauliflower-shaped hail smashed through car windshields and turned the Harbour into a bubbling and splashing cauldron.

Many [drivers](#) sought refuge under roofed [petrol stations](#) and a few brave surfers in the water at the city's famed Bondi Beach hid under their boards.

Hailstorms are fairly common in the state of New South Wales in the antipodean summer, although one on this scale has not been seen since 1999, when hailstones caused an estimated AUS\$1.7 billion in [damage](#).

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