

Dangerous wind chills, snow in Midwest; cold grips Northeast

December 15 2016



A runner goes for a run in Eagle Creek Park as snow falls Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016, in Indianapolis. (AP Photo/Darron Cummings)

Dangerously cold temperatures gripped the Upper Midwest in advance of a storm that's expected to bring several inches of snow in coming days, while schools and officials in the Northeast braced for their own blast of wintry weather.

A wind chill advisory enveloped North Dakota, Minnesota and

Wisconsin on Wednesday and stretched into parts of Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Those advisories remained in effect through Thursday morning and beyond.

The cold claimed at least one life: A 34-year-old woman died of hypothermia in St. Paul, Minnesota. She was found Monday, when temperatures dropped to 3 below zero and wind chills were minus 19.

In western Wisconsin, Thursday morning's wind chills were expected to range from 15 to 30 degrees below zero. Several inches of snow were expected to begin tracking into the region on Friday and into Saturday, the National Weather Service said. Several warming shelters had opened up to help get people out of the cold.

Low temperatures in Fargo, North Dakota, were expected to be around minus 12 Thursday, while Duluth, Minnesota was expected to see an overnight low of minus 5.

With the arctic air tracking northeast, Connecticut Gov. Dannel P. Malloy said he would activate the state's severe cold-weather protocol on Thursday, calling for state police and other agencies to work with shelters and community groups to protect vulnerable residents. Malloy also encouraged communities to open warming centers.

Vermont public safety officials warned residents to limit their time outdoors Thursday and Friday due to dangerous wind chills forecast at 35 below. In upstate New York, some schools and government offices were closing early ahead of expected lake-effect snow expected to dump 1 to 2 feet.

Much of the northern Mid-Atlantic and Northeast will stay cold for the next couple of days as the arctic air remains stuck over the northern Appalachians, the National Weather Service said.

The system also is expected to bring widespread snow from the Great Lakes to the Northeast on Thursday. Much of the central U.S. will be dry but cold.

Below-normal temperatures are expected this weekend and into Monday across the entire northern half of the country, from the Pacific Northwest to Maine and as far south as Oklahoma, Arkansas and Virginia, according to the Climate Prediction Center.

Up to half a foot of snow could fall from the Upper Mississippi Valley to the Northeast on Friday and Saturday, and areas east of the Appalachian Mountains could see freezing rain and sleet on Saturday.

Another arctic air mass on the heels of this cold front is expected to bring temperatures to the northern Plains over the weekend and into early next week that will be as much as 24 degrees below normal, according to Climate Prediction Center forecaster Stephen Baxter.

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