

'Life-threatening' cold sets in across much of United States



Washington, January 22 (RHC)-- Bitter cold is setting in after a major winter storm blanketed a wide swath of the U.S. in snow, sleet and rain over the past several days, creating dangerously icy conditions that promise to complicate cleanup efforts and make travel challenging.

Some of the coldest temperatures felt so far this season have set in across the Midwest and Northeast. Wind chills brought temperatures into teens in the New York City area and down to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 40 degrees Celsius) in upstate New York, according to the National Weather Service.

In New England, temperatures fell to as low as 20 F (29 C) below zero around Boston and as low as 35 F (37 C) below zero in parts of Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire, the service said. Temperatures across the Great Lakes, Ohio Valley and the Mid-Atlantic have dropped 10 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit (-12 to -6 Celsius) below average, the service said.

"It's life-threatening," said Ray O'Keefe, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Albany. "These are dangerous conditions that we're going to be in and they're prolonged."

Over the past several days, there have been power outages, canceled trains and planes, overnight stays at the airport and traffic jams. Local officials warned residents to limit their time outside to prevent frostbite and to avoid treacherous travel conditions. They also said areas could see strong wind gusts,

flooding and further power outages.

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