

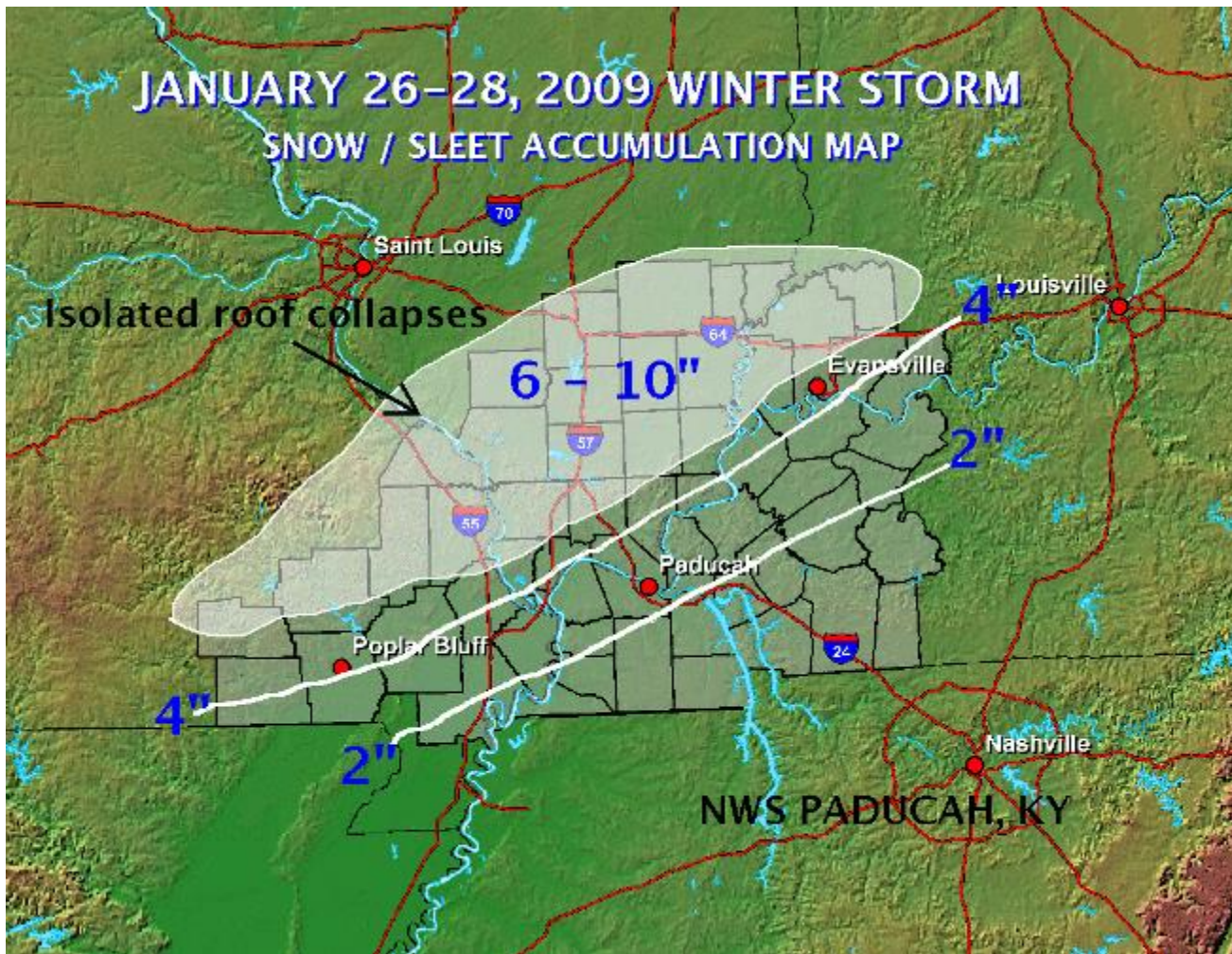
ICE STORM 2009: Beauty and Destruction



Life abruptly changed as a growing layer of ice dragged trees and power lines to the ground. Lights and heat went out for days and even weeks. Such basics as food, water, and gas were difficult to obtain. Lines for gas were hours long. Communication by phone was all but impossible, leaving only radio and satellite phones as options. Curfews were imposed at night to prevent looting and to allow recovery crews more space. For the first time, the entire Kentucky National Guard was deployed. Troops helped clear roads, maintain order, and provide for victims' needs. Utility companies reported remarkable damage to their systems: More than 145 miles of high-voltage transmission lines were down in southeast Missouri, and 20 percent of one utility company's system was rebuilt. Shelters quickly filled with hundreds of cold and hungry storm victims. Scarred trees would mark the landscape for years to come. Cleanup of debris would last into the following summer. Photo at left of the Paducah NWS radar tower, courtesy of Beau Dodson.

Late in the evening of Tuesday, Jan. 27, over 90 percent of southwestern Kentucky was without power. By Feb. 4, power was restored to most residents of cities. However, some rural areas in the hardest hit areas of western Kentucky and extreme southeast Missouri were still facing weeks without power. Trees fell on homes and cars. Numerous trees and power lines blocked roads and caused a major travel hazard in the days following the storm. There were at least fourteen fatalities either directly or indirectly related to the storm.





Remarks:

"The biggest natural disaster in modern Kentucky history" - Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear

Worst natural disaster in history of Crittenden County - Crittenden County, KY official county historian

Thank you to the many fine folks who sent in photos of the destructive ice storm.

Photo of the National Weather Service office in Paducah (below) taken during the middle of the ice storm on the afternoon of the 27th. Trees in front of the office were heavily damaged. (Photo by David Blanchard)



Below is a photo taken immediately after the ice storm (early on the 28th), looking across the street from the Paducah NWS office.



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 27. A tree blocked a lane of the Purchase Parkway in Fulton County, KY. Other major highways including Interstate 24 were blocked by trees. (courtesy of Lew Jetton)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 27 (courtesy of Matt Jarvis; Greenville, KY)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon (courtesy of Jenny Dunnaway; Murray, KY)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon (courtesy of Beau Dodson; near Paducah, KY)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon (courtesy of John Arrison; near Joppa, IL in Massac Co.)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm late Tuesday afternoon (courtesy of Jessica Darnall; Benton, KY)



Photo below taken during the middle of the ice storm on Tuesday afternoon (courtesy of Mary Majors; near Doniphan, MO)



Photo below taken at the beginning of the ice storm on Tuesday morning (courtesy of Rick Shanklin; Calvert City, KY)



Photo below taken at the beginning of the ice storm on Tuesday morning (courtesy of Beau Dodson; Lone Oak, KY)



Here are some more pictures courtesy of Beau Dotson









And one from NWS folks showing the individual blades of grass covered in ice

