

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Hundreds of schools were closed and more than 160,000 customers were without power Wednesday in the Northeast as a storm that's expected to "sit and spin" brought wet, heavy snow to some areas that have had a relatively snowless winter until now.

Nearly two feet of snow fell outside Albany, according to the National Weather Service, which expected another 2-4 inches to fall by the end of the day. Forecasters said Wednesday's storm would be followed by another expected to start Thursday and dump a foot or more on some areas by Friday, accompanied by high winds. Meteorologists said some areas of New York's Adirondack and Catskill mountains and Vermont's Green Mountains could get as much as 2 feet by the weekend.

"The storm really isn't going to go away quickly," said meteorologist Hugh Johnson of the weather service's Albany office. "It might sit and spin for a few days. It might not be until early next week that we get rid of the storm completely."

The storm began Tuesday and caused numerous accidents on New York interstate highways in the Hudson Valley, but state police said no serious injuries were reported.

The storm ended a long stretch without a major snowfall in eastern New York and northern New England, which had been spared from much of the severe weather that socked the mid-Atlantic with several feet of snow in recent weeks.

In fact, some New England areas were forced to cancel winter festivals, dog sled races and snow sculpting events this year due to the lack of any snow at all.

Before Wednesday, the Albany area had received just 28 inches of snow, well below its average snowfall total of 46 inches for this time of year. Wednesday's snow was particularly wet and thick.

Pat McDonough and her stepson spent more than a half hour shoveling the snow off their driveway and front walk in Voorheesville, a village just west of Albany.

"We tried the snowblower and it didn't work," McDonough said. "It keeps clogging up."

Due to a forecast that calls for significant snowfall in the metropolitan region, many carriers have already begun canceling flights, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said on its Web site Wednesday.

Travelers were advised to check with their airline before departing for the airport.

New York's power outages topped 135,000 Wednesday morning and were climbing as utility crews reached rural areas of the Hudson Valley and Catskills where up to 18 inches of snow had fallen. Another 26,000 outages were reported in Vermont and western Massachusetts. Schools were closed around eastern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and western Massachusetts.

More snow is on the way for parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania still digging out from back-to-back blizzards earlier this month. As much as 6 inches was predicted over the central portion of New Jersey, and Philadelphia could get up to 8 inches by Thursday.

## Big bonuses on Wall Street

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street bonuses climbed 17 percent in 2009 to \$20.3 billion as many of the investment banks that were bailed out at taxpayer expense reported blowout profits.

The announcement Tuesday by New York Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli was likely to outrage many Americans who are barely getting by. And it happened on the same day that private economists reported a plunge in consumer confidence — a blow to hopes that spending by shoppers would help speed up an economic recovery.

"Wall Street is vital to New York's economy, and the dollars generated by the industry help the state's bottom line," DiNapoli said. "But for most Americans, these huge bonuses are a bitter pill and hard to comprehend. ... Taxpayers bailed them out, and now they're back making money while many New York families are still struggling to make ends meet."

The reason for the surge in bonuses was simple: Wall Street firms had a great year.

Broker-dealer operations associated with the New York Stock Exchange earned a record \$49.9 billion through the year's first three quarters. The firms probably closed out the year \$55 billion in the black, DiNapoli's office said.

"Oh, God!" over and over again into the phone after finding her daughter beaten to death in the driveway of their North Carolina home.

Later that day, she heard the 911 recording on the local news and vomited.

"This was not only the most painful thing I have ever been through, it should have been the most private," she said in an e-mail.

Because of situations like Casey's, lawmakers in Alabama, Ohio and Wisconsin are deciding whether to bar the public release of 911 calls.

Missouri, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Wyoming already keep such recordings private. But generally, most states consider emergency calls public records available on request,

"Nationally there is a growing concern about the release of audiotapes that don't involve newsworthy people or events — just things that people like to hear because of their sensational nature," said Sonny Brasfield, executive director of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, which drafted legislation in the state to bar the release of 911 recordings. "There is a concern nationally that these kinds of things are having a chilling effect on people's willingness to call 911."

Open-government advocates disagree and say that prohibiting the release of the recordings takes away a valuable tool that has exposed botched calls.

For example, a Detroit dispatcher

## PUBLIC NOTICE YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

87

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
FirstLink

211 Designation Application  
Case No. PU-09-713  
Notice of Intent to Reopen Proceeding  
February 19, 2010  
On October 30, 2009, MHAND notified the Commission that, due to lack of economic support, it must relinquish its designation as the 211 dialing code user.

On November 2, 2009, FirstLink notified the Commission that effective October 30, 2009, FirstLink will temporarily provide statewide 211 operations until a decision is made about 211's future. FirstLink subsequently indicated it would provide statewide 211 operations until March 15, 2010.

On November 23, 2009, FirstLink filed a letter requesting designation as the statewide 211 dialing code user.  
On January 25, 2010, FirstLink notified the Commission that it was no longer interested in a statewide 211 designation due to a lack of stable long-term funding for the entire state. Therefore, FirstLink requested to be the designated user of the 211 dialing code in Cass County.

On February 10, 2010, the Commission authorized FirstLink to use the 211 dialing code in Cass County, North Dakota for access to community information and referral services unless and until the Commission authorizes a different entity to use the 211 dialing code.

On February 19, 2010, a meeting of stakeholders was held to assess support for statewide 211 services going forward.

The Commission has reason to believe that conditions of fact have so changed as to require, and that public interest requires, the reopening of this proceeding.

The issues to be considered are:  
1. Is any other entity interested in designation as the user of the 211 dial code in North Dakota?  
2. Is FirstLink's use of the statewide 211 dial code consistent with the FCC intended use of that code?  
3. Is it in the public interest for the Commission to authorize FirstLink statewide use of the 211 dialing code, effective when FirstLink's 211 services are sufficiently funded?

Those interested are invited to comment in writing. Persons desiring a hearing must file a written request identifying their interest in the proceeding and the reasons for requesting a hearing. Comments and requests for hearing must be received by March 17, 2010. If deemed appropriate, the Commission can determine the matter without a hearing.

For more information contact the Public Service Commission, State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505, 701-328-2400; or Relay North Dakota 1-800-366-6888 TTY. If you require any auxiliary aids or services, such as readers, signers, or Braille materials please notify the Commission.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
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(February 24, 2010)

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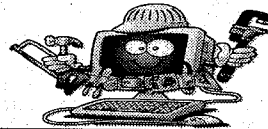
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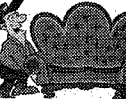


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