

# BATTALION

## THE BATTALION

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### The Weather

Today		Tomorrow	
High .....	29	High .....	51
Low .....	21	Low .....	29
Chance of rain .....	30%	Chance of rain .....	30%



A blast of arctic air Tuesday bringing sleet and freezing rain, covered the Brazos area in ice.

Despite weather conditions, residents adapted to the change without incident.

photo by Howard Elders

## Winter freeze blankets states; people and crops hurt in ice

**United Press International**  
The hardest freeze of this century kept a stranglehold on the Northeast and devastated the heart of Dixie today, rendering unequipped cities helpless under 7-inch snows and causing \$500 million in damage to tender Florida crops. The weather was blamed for at least 130 deaths.

Tennessee reported 4 inches of snow, Arkansas 7 inches, and Mississippi was laboring under slush and sleet in one of its worst storms in decades. Freezing rain glazed the Arkansas-Louisiana border area and much of Alabama, Northern Georgia, including

Atlanta, and the western Carolinas also had snow.

The record cold maintained its strongest foothold in the Northeast, where the mercury at Worcester, Mass., fell to 8 below zero and brisk winds plunged the wind-chill to a minus 46 degrees.

Florida officials said Tuesday's freeze was as damaging as the one in 1977, which caused \$500 million in damages to Florida's agriculture.

As a result, orange juice, sugar and many vegetables will be more expensive, possibly within only a few days, agriculture spokesmen said.

Most officials in the South threw up their hands in dismay and were left to watch cities close down for lack of snow removal equipment.

Interstate highways became parking lots and bars and hotel lobbies became havens for thousands of stranded motorists in Georgia, where a bitter winter storm left up to 6 inches of snow and icy roads.

Commuters abandoned cars and attempted to walk miles to get home in Atlanta. Flights were canceled because pilots, crews and passengers couldn't get to the airport and children huddled, stranded in school buildings.

"We have wall-to-wall people lined up to use the phones to call home and say they're stranded," said Doug Brader, night auditor at the downtown Atlanta Rodeway Inn.

The Red Cross said hundreds of people were at shelters, including about 150 school children.

One Atlanta funeral home began taking in the stranded.

"It was the first place I came to that seemed to be inhabited," said Nancy Smith, 28, adding some people had journeyed across the street to a bar.

Louisiana Gov. Dave Treen called out the National Guard in New Roads Tuesday to deliver water to nursing homes and other facilities left without electricity in the town of less than 4,000.

The 24-mile Lake Pontchartrain Causeway between New Orleans and Covington was shut down most of Tuesday and hospitals across the state postponed elective surgery because of power problems.

The frozen Midwest was granted some respite as the mercury rose by a few degrees—above zero and into single-digit levels. But parts of Iowa, Indiana and Illinois reported snowstorms today.

## Enrollment expected to drop from fall figures

More than 33,000 students are expected to be enrolled for the spring semester classes at Texas A&M University, which begin Monday. Associate Registrar Donald D. Carter says 24,000 students already have pre-registered. Fall semester enrollment exceeded 35,000 students. Carter said the decline in enrollment between the fall and spring semesters occurs every year.

"Based on historic enrollment figures, we'll have anywhere from 1,200 to 1,500 fewer students in the spring," Carter said. He attributes the drop in enrollment to the large number of students who graduated in December and the small number of freshmen entering the University.

"We only get 100 new freshmen in the spring compared to the 6,000 who entered in the fall," Carter said. "Most of our spring enrollment comes from

transfer students and graduate students."

Delayed registration and drop-add start today and continue through Jan. 23. Drop-add is being held at G. Rollie White Coliseum from 8 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday.

The coliseum will be open from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday for students who need to pick up revised schedules.

Other noteworthy dates are as follows:

— Jan. 22 - last day to enroll in the University and last day to add new classes

— Feb. 2 - last day to drop classes with no record

— Feb. 5 - last day to apply for graduate and undergraduate degrees to be awarded in May

— Feb. 19 - last day to drop classes with no penalty (Q-drop).

## Arctic weather creates few problems locally

By DANIEL PUCKETT

**Battalion Staff**  
Weather that seemed more characteristic of Minneapolis than of College Station blew into the area Sunday, bringing single-digit temperatures, sleet and freezing rain.

But, despite closed schools and businesses, burst water pipes and a power-plant breakdown, residents Tuesday seemed to be weathering the winter storm gracefully.

As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, the College Station Police Department reported no traffic accidents for the day, and a spokesman for the fire department said it had responded to no house fire calls. Capt. Dave Giordano of the College Station Fire Department said fire trucks had responded to several public assistance calls — mostly cleaning up from broken water pipes—but that residents were being safety-conscious in their handling of heaters.

However, both the Bryan and College Station school districts shut down Monday and Tuesday because of a natural gas curtailment ordered by Lone Star Gas Co. A spokeswoman for the College Station Independent School District said schools would remain closed today and added that she did not know when classes would resume.

Telephones at the Bryan Independent School District offices were not being answered Tuesday afternoon.

Schools were not the only institutions affected by the gas curtailment. Several local businesses were forced to shut down by the shortage of natural gas supplies, and cold weather caused such a shortage of electricity that both College Station and Bryan were asking residents to conserve energy.

Specifically, the two cities asked consumers to turn their thermostats down to 65-68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night, to close off unoccupied

rooms and shut the heat vents in them, to turn off space heaters when leaving the room for several hours and to keep fireplace dampers closed unless a fire is burning.

A spokesman for Lone Star Gas Co. said the company did not know when the gas curtailment would end and that "it all depends on the weather."

But the forecast for the rest of the week is not encouraging. Cold weather is expected to continue through the weekend, with only a brief let-up Thursday afternoon and Friday, said Charlie Benton, weather station manager for Texas A&M University's Department of Meteorology.

Benton said the passage of another cold front early this morning will prolong the cold temperatures until Thursday and the threat of sleet and freezing rain through the morning hours today.

Skies should become partly cloudy Thursday, he said, with temperatures moderating Friday, but another cold front Friday night will drop temperatures again by Saturday.

Benton said the cold weather and freezing rain are not unusual for this time of year in College Station. Although Monday's low of 9 degrees was the coldest reading since 1973 and set a record for that date, it did not set a record for January. The record low here is 3 degrees below zero, set Jan. 31, 1949.

And Tuesday's freezing rain is the usual form of frozen precipitation here, he said, snow being a rare occurrence in the area. For snow to fall, the layer of cold air overhead must be very thick.

But here, Benton said, warm, moist air usually overrides a thin layer of cold air, producing sleet or freezing rain, rather than snow.

Benton said it was too early to tell whether the weekend cold snap would produce more icy conditions.

Monday's Arctic cold burst many water pipes throughout the area, including several on campus. Physical Plant Director Joe Estill said water-bearing coils in air-conditioning units broke in the Reed McDonald Building, the Regents Annex of the Memorial Student Center and in President Frank Vandiver's home.

Estill said he could not estimate the cost of repairing the damage, but said he expected it to be between \$20,000 and \$40,000.

The cold also may have caused the shutdown of Bryan's Roland Dansby Power Plant Monday. Officials blamed the shutdown on frozen instruments in the plant and said the damage may take a week to fix.

However, the bitter cold has done little harm to local agriculture, said Michael Flynn, meteorologist-in-charge at the Southwest Agricultural Weather Service Center.

Since little is grown locally during the winter months, Flynn said, the weather could not do much damage. The winter oats and wheat crops are hardy enough to withstand freezing temperatures and rain, though they might be slightly burned.

No reports of livestock losses have reached his office, he said, but producers will probably have to feed cattle more than they normally would, to make up for grass which is unavailable for grazing.

In addition, he said, the freeze in the Rio Grande Valley apparently failed to damage the citrus crop there. However, low temperatures Monday night may have been severe enough in Florida to cause severe losses to citrus growers.

"Valley growers might be pretty happy about that," Flynn said, since widespread damage to the Florida crop would probably cause citrus prices to rise nationwide.

## Haig presents options for autonomy to Egypt

**United Press International**  
CAIRO, Egypt — Secretary of State Alexander Haig, reportedly blaming lack of political will by Israel for the stalled Palestinian autonomy talks, brought new options in the dispute to a meeting today with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Haig and his chief Middle East advisers met Tuesday with Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali and his advisers for nearly two hours in a meeting that dealt exclusively with Palestinian autonomy.

"Egypt will spare no effort to keep the talks going until they bring about

their desired results," Ali told Haig on his arrival in Cairo Tuesday. Palestinian autonomy is called for in the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

The underlying problem, according to an assessment just completed by the State Department, is the lack of political will on the part of the Israeli government to make the transition to real autonomy for the 1.2 million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The state-controlled Middle East News Agency reported Haig said he wants to "play a role, personally and

directly, in giving a push to the negotiations," and Ali welcomed this.

Haig brought the results of that Middle East assessment with several options but "no grandiose new ideas," U.S. officials said.

One possibility was naming a new U.S. high-level representative to the talks to replace Sol Linowitz who gave up the post when former President Jimmy Carter left office.

The Secretary of State is scheduled to leave Thursday for a 24-hour visit to Israel.



### Back-to-school moving blues

Diana Dean (right), a freshman accounting major from Sugar Land, gets help moving into her room in Hobby Hall from her sister, Debbie Dean, a

Texas A&M graduate. Debbie, who is continuing at Texas A&M to get her teaching certificate, is moving out of the room.