

## Panhandle awakens to 9 inches of snow

Officials warn of decreased visibility, ice as conditions expected to worsen

LUBBOCK (AP) — Panhandle residents awoke to a snowstorm Tuesday, forcing many to trudge through wintry streets to get to the polls on Election Day. The snow stretched from areas south of Lubbock to areas north of Amarillo, by the roads became snowpacked and slushy. The snow continued to fall throughout the morning, worsening conditions, decreasing visibility and blanketing already snow-covered trees and cars.

"We're still snowing," said Richard Davis, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Amarillo. "We've had a total of 7 inches on the ground here in Lubbock. The Panhandle town of Boys Ranch also received 9 inches on the ground by 5 p.m."

**"When I looked out this morning, I didn't expect to see this much snow. I thought maybe little flakes. But surprise, it's like Christmas."**

— Mary Jane Gutierrez  
Lubbock resident

while Vega and Claude both had between 5 and 6 inches. Channing and Shamrock had between 3 and 4 inches. Lubbock received about 4 inches and was anticipating more.

As much as a foot of snow was expected to be on the ground near Boys Ranch by midnight Tuesday, with 10 inches expected in Amarillo. Lesser amounts between 5 and 7 inches were forecast in Lubbock.

"If it is not an emergency, we recommend staying at home," Davis said. "Snow reduces visibility worse than about any other phenomena that we have. It reflects light because it's white, so it cuts down on being able to see through it."

Davis said overnight lows in the 20s could freeze wet roads into a sheet of

ice. "It will refreeze again Wednesday night and then Thursday it will begin to melt," he said.

In El Paso, Trans Mountain Road — the highest road in Texas at about 5,200 feet above sea level — snow was accumulating but had not yet been closed as of Tuesday evening. The road joins the two sides of El Paso across the Franklin Mountains.

"I would rather have this than the ice," said Mary Jane Gutierrez, campaigning outside McWhorter Elementary in Lubbock for her husband, who was running for county commissioner.

"When I looked out this morning, I didn't expect to see this much snow," she said. "I thought maybe little flakes. But surprise, it's like Christmas."

### News in Brief

#### Electric utility deregulation moving slowly

AUSTIN (AP) — Deregulating the electric power industry — touted as a way to bring cheaper, more plentiful power to homes and businesses — has had a slow start in Texas.

Almost two months after Sept. 1, the first day new retailers could file to begin providing electricity to homes and small businesses, only one application had come in.

"No one wanted to be first," Janee Briesemeister, a policy analyst with Consumer Union's Austin

office, told the Texas Journal of The Wall Street Journal in Wednesday's editions.

Executives of New Power Co., a subsidiary of Greenwich, Conn.-based TNPC Inc., submitted the first application to be a retail electricity provider — buying electricity from power generators, then reselling it to consumers.

Houston-based Enron Corp. formed the company and is the largest shareholder. Executives of New Power also have a marketing deal with America Online Inc., of Dulles, Va., and Armonk, N.Y.-based International Business Machines Corp. has agreed to provide back-of-

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