

Storm causes flooding, power outages and closures in N.B.

Several roads closed, thousands of NB Power customers without electricity

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All of New Brunswick remains under weather warnings from Environment Canada, with a nor'easter that hammered the province with snow, rain, freezing rain and ice pellets on Wednesday expected to remain over the region for the next 24 to 36 hours.

The northern part of the province is under a winter storm warning, while rainfall warnings are in place for the southern half of the province.

Bathurst received an estimated 48 cm of snow by about 6 p.m., with snow and ice pellets expected to continue into the evening, said CBC meteorologist Kalin Mitchell.

Meanwhile, he expects several rainfall records to be broken in the south.

"We've already seen a month's worth of rain come down in a span of 24 hours," Mitchell said.

The heavy rainfall prompted River Watch to issue a flood warning for the Nashwaak River and Canaan River in the Havelock region, near Cherryvale Road late Wednesday afternoon.

There is also a flood watch in place for the Kennebecasis River and its tributaries in the Sussex and Sussex Corner region.

"Water levels in these areas have been rising steadily throughout the day and are nearing flood stage. With rain expected to persist, water levels could surpass flood stage sometime this evening," the Department of Public Safety's Emergency Measures Organization said in a statement.

The unofficial rainfall amounts as of 7 p.m. were:

- Grand Manan: 112 mm
- Fundy Park: 81.7 mm
- Bouctouche: 88.6 mm
- Doaktown: 74.3 mm
- Kouchibouguac: 84.2 mm

- Miramichi: 60 mm, in addition to 20 cm of snow earlier
- Fredericton: 44.9 mm

An additional 80-100 mm of rainfall is expected by Thursday morning.

In the Village of Memramcook, Principale Street was already flooded by about 4 p.m. on Wednesday. Civic addresses below 975 are accessible via Dover Road in Dieppe, the village said in a tweet.

In Kent, Albert and Westmorland counties, water was also over numerous roads, according to the Department of Transportation.

The department also issued advisories about several other road closures due to flooding.

In the Moncton district, the closures include:

- Dawson Road, between Route 114 and Steve Cote Road
- Des Pellerins Road, from Route 515 to Des Dailaires Road
- Jailletville Road, from Girvan Road to Route 490
- LeBlanc Office Road in Saint-Andre-LeBlanc
- Route 106, from Cherry Burton Road in Dorchester, to intersection of Route 935 and Route 106
- Route 134, at Exit 53 southbound
- Route 490, from Route 470 to Jailletville Road
- Route 515, from Route 495 to Pellerin Road
- Route 933 in Haute-Aboujagne

The closures include emergency vehicles and are scheduled to remain in place until Friday or Saturday, the department said.

In the Saint John district, part of Route 880 is closed in Lower Millstream, and reduced to one lane at Millstream Bridge.

The north end of the bridge remains accessible from Route 10 and south of the bridge is accessible via Route 121, the advisory states.

The New Brunswick Department of Transportation was forced to close Wheeler Boulevard at West Main Street in Moncton due to flooding in the morning, but it was subsequently reopened.

Crews standing knee deep in water used shovels and heavy equipment to clear storm drains. After spending more than three hours unclogging leaves, grass and rocks, they managed to get traffic moving again.

Power outages

Many New Brunswickers are expected to remain without power overnight, NB Power announced at about 6:30 p.m.

"Crews will continue to work throughout the night to ensure emergencies are addressed," it posted on Twitter.

"Estimated times of restoration will be updated as crews are able to assess further damages in daylight hours."

More than 8,300 NB Power customers were still without electricity as of 7 p.m., according to the utility's website.

That's down from the approximately 11,000 outages reported at 10:30 a.m.

"The storm is persisting with high winds, freezing rain & snow in Northern NB. We're working to restore power where it's safe to do so," NB Power tweeted.

CBC meteorologist Kalin Mitchell says Micou Island saw peak winds of 82 km/h, while other regions had wind gusts of between 40 and 70 km/h.

The utility is urging people to stay away from downed lines and trees, as they could be energized and contact could be fatal.

The Tracadie area has the most extensive outages with 3,076 homes and businesses affected, followed by the Woodstock area with 1,352.

The Fredericton area is dealing with 1,913 outages, while Bathurst has about 1,780, and Miramichi, 971.

Other areas without power include Grand Falls (162), Campbellton-Dalhousie (73), and Bouctouche (25).

Snow also affecting road conditions

RCMP believe weather and road conditions may have been a factor in a head-on collision between a car and tractor-trailer on Route 8 outside of Fredericton shortly after midnight that killed three people.

The RCMP were cautioning that heavy rain could make water pool on the roads and motorists should slow down to avoid hydro-planing.

Road conditions in the northwest Wednesday morning were reported as snow covered, with icy patches, drifting snow and slushy patches.

Felicia Murphy of Brun-Way, which operates and maintains the Trans-Canada Highway from Longs Creek to the Quebec border, said the highway was seeing a mixed bag of weather.

Murphy said travellers should use caution and be wary of hydro-planing on water-covered roads.

Icy patches were reported in some areas of central and western New Brunswick.

Ross Mathers of Maritime Road Development Corp., which maintains the Trans-Canada from Longs Creek to Moncton, said conditions were mainly bare earlier Wednesday, but the passing lane was icy in some places.

Mathers said it has been a busy fall for storms and MRDC has already used 1,000 tons of salt, or 10 times more than usual for this time of year.

"We normally get eight or nine centimetres of snow all November. We are over 55 centimetres," said Mathers.

"We normally get one minor snowstorm. We've had, I think, two to three majors and a couple of minors. So it was a very taxing month, November, and it looks like December is the same way."

Most schools in province closed Wednesday

Anglophone West, Anglophone North and Francophone North-West school districts closed schools for the day Wednesday.

Francophone South School district closed all of its schools except those in Saint John and Quispamsis.

Anglophone South schools were open but buses were running one hour late.