



Some Of 1.4 Million Without Power After U.S. Ice Storm May Not Get It Back Until Mid-Feb.

Thursday January 29, 2009
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The storm that lashed the GTA with [another 10-15 centimetres of snow](#) on Wednesday has moved off and while we're digging out, the worst is over for us.

But for those in parts of the U.S. hit by the same disturbance, the suffering is just beginning.

The massive system that just brushed Toronto hit like a weather freight train down south, and has left countless residents in the dark and cold with no timeframe about when their lives will get back to normal.

The problem for most wasn't the snow - although there was plenty of that - but the ice, which clung heavily to trees and power lines, bringing down both and leading to widespread blackouts. Glazed roads coated with slippery surfaces are making it harder for crews to reach the areas where repairs are the most badly needed, complicating efforts to restore hydro.

More than 1.4 million families are without any electricity in an area stretching from Oklahoma to West Virginia. Some 350,000 customers have no heat in Arkansas. About 500,000 are powerless in Kentucky. And that's just a best guess. Officials admit the totals could be much higher.

One Arkansas hydro spokesman calls it the equivalent of a winter tornado, as ice 7.6 centimetres thick hangs over some areas.

Many states have declared emergencies, opening up shelters and warming centres for those who are freezing inside their own homes.

The terrible weather has been blamed for 23 deaths, including six in Texas where the storm had its roots, and four more in Arkansas.

Travel is impossible in some places and schools and businesses remain closed for the foreseeable future until power can be restored.

But that might not happen anytime soon. Some officials are already warning it could be mid-February before they're able to get electricity back in the hardest hit areas. That's more than half a month away.