



Snow Squall Warnings: An Overview

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Why Worry About Snow Squalls?

There is a long history of deadly accidents associated with snow squalls.

Snow squalls can cause localized extreme impacts to the traveling public and to commerce for brief periods of time.

The rapid onset of whiteout conditions, combined with gusty winds and falling temperatures can cause extremely dangerous conditions for motorists.

Annual highway fatalities from these events can exceed fatalities from tornadoes and floods combined for portions of the U.S.

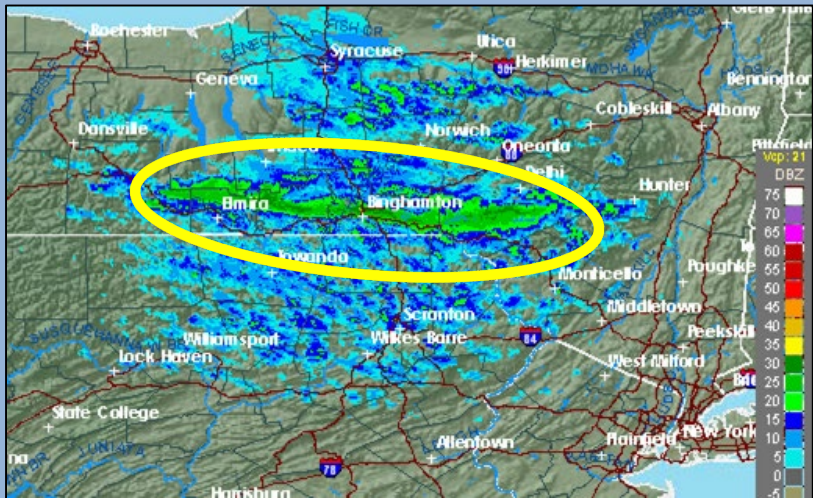




What Is A Snow Squall?



- Intense short-lived burst of heavy snowfall (15 minutes or more).
- Quick reduction in visibilities (typically less than ¼ mile) and is often accompanied by gusty winds in excess of 30 mph.
- Similar to blizzard conditions, but localized and shorter in duration.
- Quick snow accumulations in excess of 0.5 inch possible over very short time durations.





Other Snow Squall Features

- Typically occur during the daytime hours.
- Often causes chain-reaction accidents resulting in injuries and deaths.
- Can be accompanied by flash-freeze road conditions.
- Speed and volume of traffic a factor:
 - Pile-ups more likely with vehicles traveling at higher speeds.
 - Less traffic volume at night limits potential accidents vs. daytime.





Snow Squall Warning Facts



Implemented on January 16, 2018

*So far, none have been issued for southeast Michigan



“Short-fused” in nature



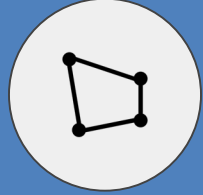
Issued for smaller geographic areas for up to 60 minutes

*Across 1-3 county area



Lead time will generally be 20 to 30 minutes or longer

*Typically issued between 5am – 11pm



Issued by WarnGen in a Polygon Format

maroon/burgundy color



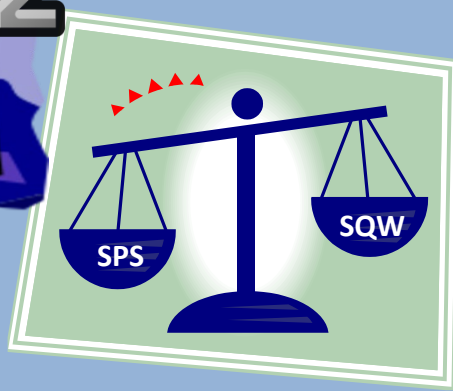
Similar in format to Severe Thunderstorm Warnings



Special Considerations



Snow squalls are a unique hazard for motorists, especially on highways and interstates, and during higher traffic volumes.



- Available on NOAA Weather Radio
- Currently, not available on EAS. However, SE MI broadcasters encouraged to treat as a “base” Severe T-Storm Warning (60 mph winds)
- WEA (cell phones) after May 2019

- Lean toward a Special Weather Statement in most situations between 11pm – 5am.
- Discretion made based on traffic, highways impacted, etc.

- How Snow Squall Warnings are treated with other winter weather hazards in effect...
 - Not issued if a Winter Storm Warning is in effect
 - If conditions warrant, may be issued if a Winter Weather Advisory is in effect



Snow Squall Warning Example



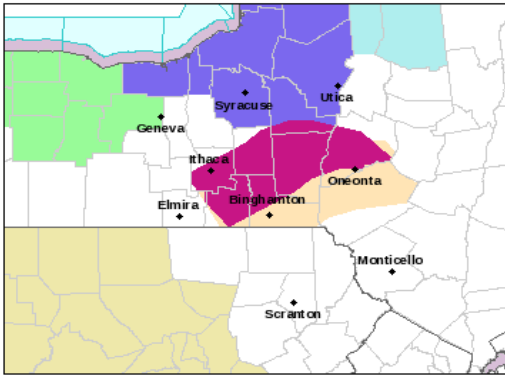
Webpage

NWS Forecast Office Binghamton, NY

Weather.gov > Binghamton, NY

[Current Hazards](#) [Current Conditions](#) [Radar](#) [Forecasts](#) [Rivers and Lakes](#) [Climate and Past Wea](#)

Click a location below for detailed forecast.



Last Map Update: Fri, Feb. 2, 2018 at 10:36:07 am EST

[Watches, Warnings & Advisories](#)

Snow Squall Warning

[Winter Weather Advisory](#)

[Wind Chill Advisory](#)

[Small Craft Advisory](#)

[Special Weather Statement](#)

[Hazardous Weather Outlook](#)

[Short Term Forecast](#)

[Zoom Out](#) [Zoom In](#)

Hazardous Weather Conditions

- [Snow Squall Warning in effect from February 2, 09:50 AM EST until February 2, 10:45 AM EST](#)

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Current conditions at
Cortland County-Chase Field (KN03)
Lat: 42.59°N Lon: 76.21°W Elev: 1196ft.

Light Snow
14°F
-10°C

Humidity 79%
Wind Speed NW 7 G 21 mph
Barometer 30.06 in
Dewpoint 9°F (-13°C)
Visibility 2.50 mi
Wind Chill 4°F (-16°C)
Last update 2 Feb 10:15 am EST

More Information:
[Local Forecast Office](#)
[More Local Wx](#)
[3 Day History](#)
[Mobile Weather](#)
[Hourly Weather Forecast](#)

Point and Click Webpage

Text Product

BULLETIN – EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED
Snow Squall Warning
National Weather Service Binghamton NY
339 PM EST Sat Feb 13 2016

NYC007-023-107-109-132115-
/O.NEW.KBGM.SQ.W.0001.160813T2039Z-160813T2115Z/
Cortland NY-Broome NY-Tompkins NY-Tioga NY-
339 PM EST Sat Feb 13 2016

The National Weather Service in Binghamton has issued a

- Snow Squall Warning For...
Southern Cortland County in Central New York...
Northwestern Broome County in Central New York...
Southeastern Tompkins County in Central New York...
Northern Tioga County in Central New York...

• Until 415 PM EST

• At 338 PM EST, a dangerous snow squall was located over South Danby or 12 miles south of Ithaca, moving northeast at 50 mph.

HAZARD...White-out conditions in heavy snow and blowing snow.

SOURCE...Radar indicated and webcams.

IMPACT...Dangerous, life-threatening travel.

• The dangerous snow squall will be near...

Caroline and Slaterville Springs around 350 PM EST.
Berkshire, Richford and Harford around 355 PM EST.
Whitney Point and Lisle around 405 PM EST.
Marathon around 410 PM EST.
Willet and East Freetown around 415 PM EST.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Conditions will deteriorate rapidly with near zero visibilities in snow and blowing snow. Travel will become impossible. You should wait until the squall passes before traveling or find a safe place to wait out the squall away from any road or highway inroads if traveling.

&&

LAT...LON 4260 7600 4242 7586 4235 7585 4214 7645

4225 7654 4228 7654 4228 7656 4230 7658

TIME...MOT...LOC 2038Z 240DEG 42KT 4227 7643

SS

Snow Squall Warning

Valid Until
11:15 AM EST Wednesday
January 30, 2019

Threat Information



Hazard

White out conditions in heavy blowing snow



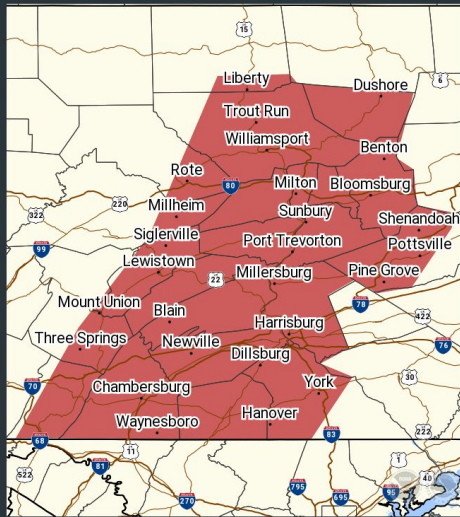
Impact

Dangerous life-threatening travel

Potential Exposure



Population: 1,816,674
Highways: I-283
I-70
I-180



Social Media (Twitter)

- Text product will list important highways and mile markers



Snow Squall Preparedness Tips

- **Remain alert to the latest forecast and travel conditions. Consider avoiding or delaying travel until the snow squall passes your location.**
- **Leave extra time if you must travel during snow squalls.**
- **Reduce your speed and turn on headlights!**
- **Don't slam on brakes!**



Ways To Receive Snow Squall Warnings

- NOAA Weather Radio
- Website: <http://weather.gov>
- Mobile: <http://mobile.weather.gov>
- iNWS: <https://inws.ncep.noaa.gov> (Public Safety Officials only)
- NWSChat: <https://nwschat.weather.gov>
- Twitter
- Other local and state dissemination systems
- State DOT Variable Message Signs (VMS) in some areas
- Future: Emergency Alert System (EAS)
- Future: Cell Phone Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)



Questions?