



Heavy snow warning issued; near blizzard seen

By Chicago Breaking News

February 8, 2010

<http://la.gopride.com/news/article.cfm/articleid/9588724>

CHICAGO, IL --

An area winter storm warning has been issued for late Monday through early Wednesday with up to 12 inches of snow expected to blanket the area, according to the National Weather Service.

The warning takes effect at 9 p.m. and will continue until 4 a.m. Wednesday. The heaviest snowfall is expected Tuesday afternoon and early evening. Blowing and drifting snow with near blizzard conditions in open areas can be expected Tuesday night, the weather service said. Both surface and air traffic are expected to encounter severe difficulties.

By Tuesday night, snowfall will generally be in the 6- to 12-inch range, with some locally higher totals possible, especially near Lake Michigan in both Illinois and Northwest Indiana, the weather service said.

Travel is expected to become difficult by late tonight. Both morning and evening rush hours Tuesday are likely to suffer.

In addition to the falling snow, northwest winds will increase to 20 to 30 mph with gusts to 40 mph Tuesday night and into early Wednesday morning. This will result in severe blowing and drifting snow in open areas.

The potential exists for ground blizzard and near white-out conditions to develop in outlying areas late Tuesday night into Wednesday morning. The blowing and drifting snow will make it difficult for road crews to keep highways clear of snow. Significant delays are expected for both arriving and departing flights at O'Hare International and Midway airports. Flight cancellations are also likely, the weather service said.

Forecasters said a strong surface low is expected to develop over the Mississippi Valley Monday and make its way into Kentucky by Tuesday and then into Ohio by Wednesday. That low is the culprit behind the heavy snow warning for north central Illinois Tuesday.

The warning covers all of the areas in the north central part of the state, including Chicago and Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties.

Meteorologists earlier issued a hazardous weather outlook covering Monday through Saturday and officials cautioned that the area can expect strong northerly winds to develop late Tuesday into Wednesday. Portions of the lower Fox River will remain flooded because of ice jams.