

## Cold snap not done yet, and freezing rain may be on the way

By **The Oregonian**

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Temperatures that dipped into the teens this morning will make a repeat appearance Tuesday morning, forecasters said, thanks to the icy grip of an Arctic cold front.

The lowest low in Northwest Oregon, said Liana Ramirez, a forecaster for the National Weather Service in Portland, was 13 degrees at Hood River, followed by a frigid 14 degrees at Kelso-Longview Airport; 16 degrees at Scappoose Airport; and 20 degrees in Eugene.

Portland's low today was 22 degrees, but it's expected to drop to 17 degrees early Tuesday morning. That's cold, but still short of the record for today of 8 degrees set back in 1972.

And talk about cold snaps: The record low temperatures for Portland for Dec. 4 through Dec. 13, all came during those ten consecutive days in 1972.

Ramirez said the cold weather will continue for the rest of the week, with some moderation coming on Wednesday, when daytime temperatures manage to climb above freezing, but will remain well below the average high of 45 degrees.

But as often happens when cold air becomes entrenched in the Pacific Northwest, the transition period to relatively warmer and wetter weather is fraught with peril, and this year it's going to start with freezing rain.

That's a real possibility late Friday and into Saturday, Ramirez said, as a weather system brings moisture into the region.

Freezing rain can throw a big monkey wrench into the best laid transportation plans.

Mayor Sam Adams, who was embarrassed during last winter's snow storm when he advised Portlanders to take transit, only to find out that TriMet had shut down, said the City Portland and TriMet are going to try and do a better job of coordinating their response if and when ice or snow arrives.

"Last year's arctic blast caught a lot us flatfooted," the mayor said today, bundled up in a black overcoat against a bitterly cold wind outside of the city's maintenance operations headquarters on North Kirby Avenue.

Adams announced that the city had made changes to plowing and sanding routes allowing TriMet to maintain bus service on the agency's priority snow routes.

The improvements include small changes to plow routes that cover about 30 additional one-to-three block sections of bus snow routes and upgrading about 20 bus snow routes to higher priority plow routes.

Steve Banta, TriMet executive director of operations, said the agency had made similar arrangements with Washington and Clackamas counties. He also said light rail switches had been fitted with new heaters, and line caps had been installed on the new Green Line.

Adams called attention to a new city Website -- [www.publicalerts.org](http://www.publicalerts.org) -- a one-stop resource for information on road conditions, transit service, utilities, school closures, weather forecasts, and public health alerts.

He said residents can type in their address and the site will provide the location of the nearest snow bus route.

The mayor urged Portlanders to take care of each other if the weather turns bad.



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Icicles were abundant even at the normally mild Oregon Coast Monday morning. These were spotted along the beach near the North jetty of Yaquina Bay. The low today at Newport was 27 degrees, and temperatures could be even colder along the coast this morning.

"Now is the time to get prepared for whatever the weather has in store for us," Adams said, urging residents to keep a 72-hour emergency kit in their homes, and chains for their cars.

"I was surprised how many calls we got last year from people who said they lived on a hill and couldn't get out, but they didn't have chains."

-- **Stuart Tomlinson**

-- **James Mayer**