

GLOBAL Warming Climate Models ARE WORTHLESS!!

# Cold Blast Spreads Shivers

Temperatures Plummet From Minnesota to Florida; St. Joseph, Mo., Hits Minus-16

By CHRIS HERRING  
AND ANN ZIMMERMAN

An Arctic blast swept across a large swath of the U.S. on Monday, sending temperatures plunging from Minnesota to Florida and bringing a bone-chilling start to the first work-week of the year.

Growers in Florida kept a close eye on citrus groves, concerned that further cold could damage their crops, while icy roads gave children in Arkansas an extra day of winter break.

Temperatures fell below zero from the Great Plains to the Northeast, following a weekend of heavy snow. The reading of minus-16 degrees in St. Joseph, Mo., Monday marked the city's coldest Jan. 4 since 1947, while minus-37 in International Falls, Minn., Sunday was the coldest there since 1911, said Frank Pereira, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service.

Dallas, Jacksonville, Fla., and Little Rock, Ark., fell nearly 20 degrees below their average temperatures for this time of

year on Monday, he said.

The cold snap is one of the nation's most widespread since January 1985, according to meteorologists at Accuweather.com. While the cold is expected to ease slightly starting Thursday, this winter is on track to be one of the coldest in the past decade or two, said Ken Reeves, director of forecasting operations at Accuweather.com.

Subfreezing temperatures that hit Central Florida on Monday morning weren't enough to harm the orange crop, but growers were bracing for another possible seven to 10 days of cold weather, said Andrew Meadows, a spokesman for Florida Citrus Mutual, the state's largest grower representative. Fears of damage prompted a rally Monday on frozen concentrated orange-juice futures.

The cold followed weekend storms that dumped more than 33 inches of snow on Burlington, Vt., canceling holiday events and keeping worshippers home from church, even in a city that is regularly blanketed

in white. Chardon, Ohio, a city of 5,200 about 30 minutes south of Lake Erie, got about 27 inches of snow over the weekend, with more coming down all day Monday, said Randy Sharpe, assistant city manager. Schools were closed and county offices shut early.

The cold, snowy weather led to strong demand at **Home Depot** Inc. stores along the East Coast and into Arkansas for snow blowers, shovels, fire-place accessories, insulation, weather stripping and pipe wrap.

Late Sunday and early Monday, the second snowfall in two weeks hit north and central Arkansas, dumping four inches on an area that rarely gets snow at all. Schools were closed across the state and state offices opened two hours late, as icy roads made driving treacherous.

Jane Dini sat out a snow day Monday at home with her son in Fayetteville, Ark. "It gave my seven-year-old a day to play in the snow and me time to catch

up on laundry," said Ms. Dini, a professor of art history at the University of Arkansas.

One group benefiting from lower-than-normal temperatures is natural-gas producers. A recent surge in gas production has glutted the market, pushing prices below \$6 per million British thermal units, less than half their level in July 2008.

Natural-gas futures rose 5.6% Monday as it became apparent the cold snap would lead to higher residential heating demand and greater use of natural gas to heat factories and other industrial buildings for several days.

"Traders tend to watch weekly inventory reports closely, and draws on inventory lead to dramatic price moves," said Bruce Bullock, director of the Maguire Energy Institute at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. "I suspect if we see another week of this, you'll see prices jump another 5%."

—Jennifer Levitz, Joe Barrett and Tom Sellen contributed to this article.

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WALL ST. JOURNAL 12/31/09