

Severe blizzard dumps up to 9 m (30 feet) of snow on parts of northern Iceland



Parts of Iceland were left blanketed in an unprecedented amount of snow reaching up to 9 m (30 feet) a week after heavy snowfall and hurricane-force gales struck the country on December 10, 2019. Several regions in the rural areas especially in the north experienced power problems until December 16.

“We’ve never before had snow on this scale,” said Valgeir Thorvaldsson, director of the Icelandic Emigration Center in Hofn, North Iceland. The center was located in two-story houses that almost disappeared under the thick snow.

“When building these houses, it never occurred to us we’d have to shovel [snow] off these roofs. There are, I believe, 9 m (30 feet) up to the gable of the biggest house, and the roofs are very steep, too,” he continued.

On Monday, December 16, Thorvaldson said there was an immense amount of snow beyond one of the houses that make up the Emigration Center. So if the snow begins to move, he explained, the house may crumble.

“Therefore, it is essential to make sure no one is inside.”

Moreover, Thorvaldson stated people still have a great deal of work to get things running again after the storm and the power outage.

The violent storm also killed up to 80 horses, according to Sigríður Björnsdóttir, a veterinarian for MAST, the Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority.

Björnsdóttir noted that the weather turned out to be more severe than expected.

“This is very tragic for the farmers,” she stated.

“There is a tradition in Iceland for horses to stay outside year-round, and that has

been the case since the country was settled. Farmers do not have stables for these horses, which require considerable space. It is, therefore, hard to imagine what more could have been done.”

On Thursday, December 19, the Icelandic Met Office has issued a yellow weather warning for the central highlands and all the eastern half of the country.

Winds of 47 to 90 km/h (29 to 56 mph) are expected with the strongest wind hitting near Oraefajokull glacier with gusts to 125 km/h (78 mph).

Featured image credit: Just Icelandic/YouTube

Source:

<https://watchers.news/2019/12/19/severe-blizzard-dumps-9-meters-snow-hofsos-iceland/>

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