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EXTREME WEATHER

Now is the winter of our discontent. Will it ever end?



A pedestrian crosses the street near Radio City Music Hall during the snowstorm that hit New York on Jan. 25. AP file

Another blast of dangerously cold Arctic air is headed for the East this weekend.

Ben Noll Washington Post

Have your lips been chapped and your skin felt extra dry this season? You're not imagining things. In places like the East and Midwest, it hasn't just been cold; humidity levels have been unusually low. Fueled by low temperatures, that lack of moisture means there hasn't been much for your skin to absorb, drying it out.

Where winter has had a tight grip, this one has been rather harsh for more reasons than one, compared with the climate of the past several winters.

But across the country overall, this winter has been a tale of two halves for the United States.

One half has been colder than average. The other, much warmer than average.

Of the contiguous states, 21 of them, as well as D.C., have experienced colder-than-average conditions, 15 warmer than average. Meanwhile, 12 have been near average.

The split screen is also true for the snow. About half of Americans have experienced above-average snowfall so far this season — the highest since 2013. As a snow drought deepened in the West, blockbuster storms have hit the Plains, Midwest and East.

Jon Meyer, the assistant state climatologist in Utah, said his state is "officially in uncharted territory" in terms of the low snowpack.

While there's some relief headed for the West, another blast of dangerously cold Arctic air is headed for the East this weekend.



The Washington Monument is glimpsed this week beyond piles of soot-covered snow after a recent storm. Rod Lamkey Jr., Associated Press

tic air is headed for the East this weekend.

WHEN WILL IT WARM UP?

It's about to get really cold in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic this weekend. Sunday could be the most frigid day of winter so far for millions of people, with widespread, dangerous wind chills of minus-10 to minus-30.

That's because the incoming air mass will arrive all the way from the Russian Arctic, passing the North Pole en route to the U.S. This is known as cross-polar flow.

But after that, there are some warmer changes on the horizon.

Those changes will first be felt in the Plains and Midwest early next week, as

much milder air from the Pacific Ocean slides down the Rocky Mountains and flows eastward.

After deep, long-lasting freezes, temperatures in Minneapolis and Chicago could rise past 40 degrees. Farther south, widespread temperatures in the 60s, 70s and 80s will reach areas hit by January's monster winter storm, including St. Louis, Oklahoma City, Dallas and Little Rock.

And by Tuesday or Wednesday, some of that milder air will finally reach the East Coast, with several rounds of above-average temperatures possible over the next two weeks — ushering a February thaw.

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TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY

Whitmer objects to suggested federal takeover of state elections

The president claimed without evidence that local systems are poorly run.

Fuad Shalhout fshalhout@mlive.com

LANSING — President Donald Trump on Tuesday suggested the federal government should take a direct role in administering elections in Michigan, claiming without evidence that local election systems are corrupt and poorly run.

Trump made the comments while speaking to reporters at the White House, where he questioned why elections are handled by states and argued federal officials should intervene in cities he said have problems counting votes, including Detroit.

He went further to suggest that federal agents could be deployed to oversee vote counting.

"A state is an agent for the federal government in elections," Trump said. "I don't know why the federal government doesn't do them anyway. But when you see some of these states about how horribly they run their elections, what a disgrace it is."

Trump also added, "Go to 2020. Look at the facts that are coming out. Rigged, crooked elections ... Take a look at Detroit. Take a look at Pennsylvania. Take a look at Philadelphia. You go take a look at Atlanta. Look at some of the places that had horrible corruption on elections. And the federal government should not allow that."

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer rejected the idea.

"Michigan's elections are safe and secure," she countered.

Whitmer said elections will continue to be run by the state and its local clerks, as outlined in the U.S. Constitution, and warned federal interference would amount to an attempt to take away Michiganders' right to vote.

Trump has previously criticized election administration in Detroit and other major cities, particularly following the 2020 presidential election.

SEE TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY, A3



President Donald Trump, shown speaking in Detroit last month, suggested this week that federal officials should run elections in Michigan, claiming without evidence that local election systems are corrupt. MLive.com files

Nessel launches ICE tracker, warns of public safety risks

She urged residents to report encounters online.

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DETROIT — Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel rolled out a new "Immigration Action Reporting Form" on Wednesday, urging residents to document Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol activity while warning that some federal immigration operations are endangering people in Michigan.

"In Michigan, we do not and we will not tolerate illegal actions against our state residents," Nessel said. "I will not hesitate to uphold the law, and that includes prosecuting unlawful actions perpetrated by federal officers."

Nessel made the remarks during a two-hour roundtable discussion Wednesday at Cadillac Place in Detroit's New Center area, where elected officials, law enforcement leaders and immigrant advocates described fear, confusion and legal risk stemming from stepped-up deportation efforts under President Donald Trump.

Among those addressing the group was Maria Klosowski, a Detroit resident and Sister of Mercy who volunteers with an interfaith group that visits immigration detainees at the Monroe County Jail.

Klosowski said conditions inside the jail and access to detainees have changed as detention numbers have increased.

"These are people who have been (in the U.S.) 30, 35 years," she said. "They're business owners, parents of U.S. citizens. They feel powerless."

Klosowski said detainees are harder to reach, religious materials are now limited or require payment, and many of the men she meets are longtime Michigan residents caught up in the immigration system after routine check-ins or paperwork issues.

Nessel said escalated immigration enforcement is making communities "fundamentally less safe" by discouraging people from reporting crimes, seeking medical care or cooperating with police.

SEE IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT, A3

