

Eight Years, Five Days, and One Inch Ago

01/24/13 352 W, 1 I - + 17 - 19

With a wintery precipitation pending for Friday afternoon, let's revisit and repost this recollection from January 19, 2009. Don't forget to fuel your vehicle after reading. And maybe plot a half-dozen alternate routes home from work or school!

On January 19, 2005, a surprise snowfall paralyzed the Capital City. 'Twas an early Wednesday afternoon when the white stuff started falling. About an inch accumulated around town. On roadways, the snow quickly melted and then refroze due to the low temps. The slick streets were soon clogged with cars and busses, from early-closing schools and businesses.

Everybody was suddenly on the road and congestion stalled traffic throughout town. Emergency responses were slowed on both major roads and popular cross streets. The gridlock also caused problems for the crews clearing snow and applying sand. Gridlock persisted on major roads into the early evening. Dozens of abandoned cars littered roadways.

Multiple-vehicle accidents occurred throughout the afternoon, though no serious injuries were reported. Firefighters assisted some stranded motorists with finding shelter. Routine commutes that day took as long as ten hours for some drivers.

Around 8:00 p.m., units responded to a working apartment fire at 1209 Holman Street. Car 72 and Truck 1 were first on scene, reporting fire showing from a second floor window. By 9:00 p.m., the Raleigh Police Department had responded to 422 vehicle accidents since 11:00 p.m. Another 60 reported accidents were pending. By midnight, officers were taking information over the phone for minor wrecks.

By 10:00 p.m., some 350 school buses were still on the road. Another 3,000 children around Wake County were being sheltered at 56 schools. Major Raleigh roadways including both the Beltline and New Bern Avenue remained stalled into the late evening. By 11:00 p.m., Governor Mike Easley had declared a state of emergency for Wake County. This allowed state government buildings to be opened as shelters. Some stranded motorists slept overnight in their cars.

By 8:00 a.m. the next morning, the Raleigh Fire Department had answered 152 calls since the start of shift. The average call volume was 82 calls per day.



Here's a nifty National Weather Service summary of that day: <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~nwsfo/storage/case..>

Here's some video footage: <http://raleighskyline.com/content/2006/1..>

Legeros - 01/19/09 - 21:42

That was a 1/4" of ice, not snow!!!! Funny story; I was in NYC celebrating my birthday, getting ready in my hotel room to go out with my girlfriend at the time. They had this story on the news and my mouth dropped to the floor!!! People waiting on I-40 for 12 hours!!!!?? Unbelievable....

Silver - 01/19/09 - 23:25

Working night shift at the 911 center that night was no great joy.

Marcus - 01/25/13 - 12:55

I spent the night at Station #2 because I could not get home from KTC. The Holman St. fire was right around the corner from KTC; and Doug Campbell and I responded to arrive first. "Code 2" size-up! I almost forgot about that one... old age is taking effect at a rapid pace! The 9 years, 10 months at KTC as Car 72 seem like a blur now.

A.C. Rich - 01/25/13 - 19:07

I was working that day on Engine 27; I was walking into the food lion on 401 and Spring Forest when it started SNOWING! I called Capt. Page on the Nextel and told him it was snowing, he called me a liar and to hurry up! Before I could get back to 27 Buffalo Rd was covered with a light dusting of snow. It didn't snow long but roads sure did freeze over, Returning from calls took on average 1 to 2 hours. Buffalo Rd was at a standstill until around 4 am. I remember we had 2 women wake us up at 4, needed to use the restroom, they said they left their work at bank at Cameron Village at 5pm. almost 12 hours in the car!

Jason Lane - 01/25/13 - 21:32

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preferred)

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What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

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Small print: All html tags except and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.