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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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DISTRIBUTION OF ICE STORMS

The Central portion of the Eastern United States is a region especially subject to ice storms and sleet, which may occur at any time from November to March. In New England, the Middle Atlantic States, the Great Interior Valleys and the Southern Lake region the average, according to H.C. Frankenfield, is generally over 3 storms a year, rising to over six in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania, and in southern Illinois and eastern Missouri. Toward the continental interior where cyclones, or lows, are weaker, there is a diminishing frequency of ice storms.

In the case of either sleet or an ice storm rain forms in a warm upper region and falls into colder surface air where the temperature is usually below freezing.

Many types of precipitation will occur in the same storm. In the South it is likely to be warm from top to bottom. Hence it will rain.

Progressing northward we find warm above and cold below -- ice storm, changing to sleet if the cold layer thickens. Still farther north we have cold from top to bottom and therefore snow. Trees in snowy northern New England are often more shapely than those of the southern New England states, because the latter are more subject to ice damage. Destructive ice storms, then, are less frequent in the southern states and in the northernmost United States and Southern Canada, than in the region between, which is more often the meeting place of overlapping warm and cold winds.

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