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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER FORECASTS FOR SHIPPERS

Many kinds of merchandise are susceptible to injury by extreme temperatures while in course of shipment unless special precautions are taken to protect them. In order that shippers may protect their goods against such conditions or time their shipments so as to avoid the danger of injury, the United States Weather Bureau issues from its various forecasting centers what are called "shippers' forecasts". These are issued only when damaging temperatures above 90 degrees in summer and below freezing in winter are expected over shipping routes. A typical forecast reads: "Protect shipments during the next 24 to 36 hours from temperatures as follows: North and east, 24 degrees; west 25 to 30 degrees; south, 32 degrees." Such forecasts apply to routes leading out of the towns where the forecasts are issued. At some stations the information is printed on cards for prompt distribution to the interests concerned.

As it is cheaper to ship perishable goods in ordinary freight cars than in insulated or heated cars in winter and in refrigerator cars in summer, the knowledge that extreme temperatures will not occur over the prospective route is valuable to the shipper. Apart from their obvious application to the shipment of fruit, vegetables, mineral waters, ink, etc., these special forecasts are valuable in connection with shipment of some commodities that are not injured by temperature extremes. For example, sand and gravel are wet when loaded. Freezing would delay unloading and tie up the cars; an expensive alternative being the thawing of the shipment with steam.

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