

AUXCOMM and SKYWARN Participation
in the
Northern Michigan Winter Storm
March 2026



Northern Michigan experienced a strong winter storm March 14th through 16th, 2026. As the storm approached, members of Auxcomm organizations in northern Michigan prepared to track the progress of the storm for the National Weather Service and also prepared to provide assistance as needed to the counties in our jurisdiction. Auxcomm groups including the Charlevoix Cheboygan and Emmet Counties Public Service Communications Organization (CCECPSO), Traverse Bay Amateur Radio Group (TBARG), and many other Auxcomm-affiliated and Skywarn-affiliated volunteers cooperated to form a network of spotter stations across District 7 and District 8 in the Northern Lower and Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Auxcomm leaders across northern Michigan met virtually Saturday evening March 14th with county emergency management directors. Emergency management and the National Weather Service needed snowfall, ice, wind direction, temperature, and damage reports throughout the storm. We made a plan to run a net every two hours throughout the storm to collect weather reports. We also planned for a rotation of net control stations to share the workload.

By Sunday morning, March 15th, snow was already falling across northern Michigan. Our first net at 10:00 AM yielded 22 check-ins with stations from Sault Ste. Marie to Harrison, Michigan. Reports came in throughout the day of heavy snowfall and poor visibility. As temperatures rose, some stations began reporting freezing rain and ice accumulation.



Heavy snow and poor visibility in East Jordan



Ice accumulation in Manton

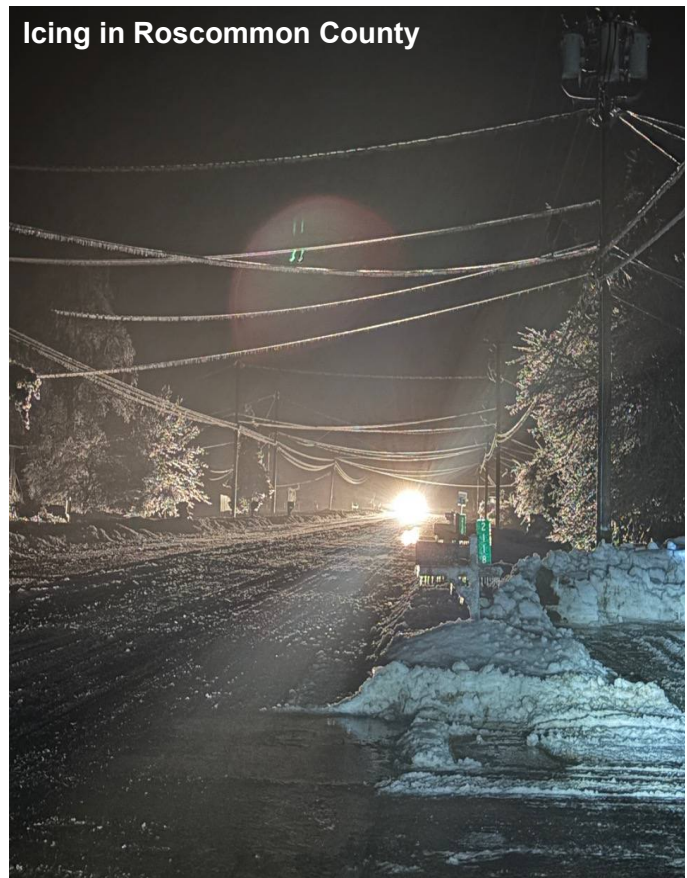
Snow was still falling and the wind was still creating hazardous conditions on Monday, March 16th. We continued collecting storm reports every two hours and continued to receive valuable information from spotters across Northern Lower Michigan and the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Some of the totals we received were over 40 inches of snow in the Straits area and over an inch of icing down in the Roscommon county and Oscoda county areas. We also received reports of widespread wind damage and power outages.

Our Auxcomm/Skywarn team worked tirelessly all weekend gathering snow totals, ice totals, wind speed, damage reports, and other disaster metrics. Our team of 30-40 spotters worked around the clock for over 40 hours straight gathering this data. This critical data was fed in real time to the National Weather Service in Gaylord, multiple emergency management agencies and 911 dispatch centers across northern Michigan as well as the State Emergency Operations Center in Lansing to facilitate situational awareness and early public warnings.

To gather this information, we used a combination of amateur radio (using repeaters on the Northern Michigan Linked Repeater Network) and Zello. Auxcomm leadership and emergency management also used a special event channel on the Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS) for coordination. These communications assets worked well during the storm and greatly enhanced our ability to share information in a timely manner.

A big thank you to all those spotters that operated with the Northern Michigan Skywarn Severe Weather Network to gather this data. This historic storm saw historic participation and collaboration

between several Auxcomm organizations, Skywarn weather spotters, the National Weather Service, 911 dispatch centers, and county emergency management offices.



Icing in Roscommon County



Heavy Snow in Negaunee