With Another Blizzard in Sight, Brush Up on Facts, Statistics and Analyses of Winter Storm Damage and Insurance

Winter Storms Accounted For 15 Percent of All Catastrophe Losses in 2014

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• NATURAL DISASTER LOSSES IN THE U.S. 2014

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NEW YORK, January 26, 2015 ? The percentage of winter-caused insured catastrophe losses more than doubled last year, following the harsh winter of 2014 and a quiet hurricane season, according to the Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.).

?Severe winter weather caused 15 percent of all insured auto, home and business catastrophe losses in the United States in 2014,? said Dr. Robert Hartwig, president of the I.I.I. and an economist. ?Losses from snow, ice, freezing and related causes totaled \$2.3 billion last year, after averaging about \$1.2 billion annually over the previous 20 years. Insured losses caused by winter weather were \$1.9 billion in 2013 so the last two years have been well above what the insurance industry has traditionally seen from this type of severe weather,? Hartwig added.

The Polar Vortex event that took place January 5-8, 2014, for instance, caused freezing, wind, ice and snow in multiple states and generated nearly \$1.7 billion of the entire winter?s \$2.3 billion in insured losses, according to ISO?s Property Claim Services (PCS), a unit of Verisk Analytics.

Between 1994 and 2013, winter storm claims accounted for 6.7 percent of all insured U.S. catastrophe losses, placing them third behind hurricanes and tropical storms (40 percent) and tornadoes (36 percent) as the costliest natural disasters, PCS noted. In 2014, however, winter storms ranked second due to the quiet hurricane season.

?Damage caused by slippery road conditions are covered under standard auto insurance policies while standard homeowners policies cover damage caused by wind, snow, severe cold and freezing rain,? Dr. Hartwig stated. ?Policyholders who need to file a claim should contact their insurance professional as soon as possible.?

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Based on perils

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As of January, 2015	Number of Events	Fatalities	Esti
Severe Thunderstorm	62	98	
Winter Storm, winter damage, cold wave, snow storm	13	115	
Flood, flash flood, storm surge	20	5	
Earthquake & Geophysical, landslides	11	45	
Tropical Cyclone	2	1	
Wildfire, Heat, & Drought	11	2	
Totals	119	266	

Source: Munich Re.

The effects of the severe winter weather has spilled over into the workplace. Winter-related slip-and-fall claims at Midwestern workplaces doubled in 2013-2014 from the previous year, according to Accident Fund Insurance Company of America and United Heartland, specialists in workers compensation insurance. Such accidents represent 29 percent of all workers compensation claims.

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