

## Some Shivering With Power Outages

Written by Steve Frank  
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Welcome to winter weather, 2014. Snow and slick roads are causing High Country residents to go into full 'snow mode,' dealing with snow covering roads that have a base of ice from yesterday's rains impacting our last bit of holiday weekend. It's good news to ski operations, not so good for many of the rest of us, trying to get around. High Winds have brought down power lines in the area, Deep Gap firemen joining utility crews at Stony Fork Road and US 421 where a line was down, and a downed line in Wilkes early this morning started a fast-moving grass fire that firemen had to deal with.

The weather turned treacherous yesterday as the morning hours brought some freezing precipitation—mostly in the form of rain, freezing on road surfaces. First areas reporting wrecks from the rain were in Ashe County, where a vehicle overturned on US 221, but then the action switched to US 221 in the Crossnore area of Avery County, where Drug Store Hill became a skating rink, and vehicles began running off of the highway and colliding with each other. At one point, emergency services reported 10 vehicles crashed in one stretch, prompting the closing of the stretch from near Linville to near the Avery-McDowell line. Then Ashe reported more wrecks, one in Lansing, and another on NC 163 in the Obids area where bridge icing is reported. Avery Schools called off their afternoon, and along with Ashe, have called off school for today. BREMCO reported that high winds caused outages that led to linemen with Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation working throughout the night to restore power for about 500 members. Linemen in Caldwell County knocked that number down to 56 members mostly in the Oak Hill community as dawn broke.

Members are urged to report all outages by calling Blue Ridge Electric's PowerLine: 1-800-448-2383.

Overnight, outages affected: 330 members in the Dry Ponds community starting at 11:26 p.m. Thursday until linemen had power restored at 12:20 a.m.; 33 members in the same community were affected at 3:08 a.m. until 4:48 a.m.; in the Kings Creek area of Caldwell County a broken power pole from a fallen tree affected power for 47 members from 11:57 p.m. until 5:30 a.m.; in Watauga County, two fallen trees took down spans of line affecting 36 members primarily on Mt. Zion Road off Hwy 421 from 2:14 a.m. until power was restored at 4:29 a.m.; and in Ashe County, a fallen tree took down a span of line near Cox Road affecting 26 members from 11:47 p.m. until 4:44 a.m.