

Wisconsin digs out from major storm

by UPI

MADISON, Wis. -- A moisture-laden storm dumped up to 21 inches of snow in Wisconsin, stranding motorists from Beloit to Madison along Interstate 90, officials said. Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle declared a state of emergency so National Guard troops could help motorists stuck in the 19-mile-long traffic jam, WISC-TV, Madison, reported. State emergency officials said snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles were used to check on the welfare of the more than 800 motorists stuck on the highway between Beloit and Madison, bringing them food or fuel as needed. National Guard officials said 15 Humvees and two 5-ton trucks also were being used to assist motorists. Two helicopters were available for aerial searches or surveillance. Lt. Col. Tim Donovan, a Wisconsin National Guard spokesman, said a Blackhawk helicopter surveying the scene reported 552 tractor-trailers and 295 passenger vehicles stranded along the interstate. The Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management activated its state Emergency Operation Center with response teams from several agencies. "We're trying to monitor the situation throughout the state," Jerry Haberl, Emergency Operation Center officer in charge, told WISC-TV. Orfordville, Wis., reported receiving 21 inches of snow, AccuWeather.com reported. Jackson, Wis., had 20 inches and Milwaukee reported 16.3 inches.

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