

Canadian iceberg activity unusually high

by UPI

ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland -- Iceberg activity off northeastern Canada is running almost double compared to all of last year's total, Canadian and U.S. officials say. The U.S. Coast Guard said there are about 600 icebergs moving off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, compared with two years ago when there almost none, the Globe and Mail reported Friday. The floes are a major concern to shipping interests and oil rigs in the North Atlantic Ocean, and are monitored by the International Ice Patrol and a private company contracted by the Canadian Ice Service. During the iceberg season, which typically runs from February to July, Canada monitors north of 50 degrees latitude, and the U.S. Coast Guard south of that. Neither Canadian nor U.S. officials would speculate on why the number was so high this year, and Scott Rogerson, commander of the U.S. Coast Guard ice patrols said there wasn't much that could be done about the icebergs. "We could hit them with bombs and break them up. (Then) what you've got is a lot of small pieces," Rogerson said. "Icebergs are tenacious, in the sense that the only way to get rid of them is high waves and warm water."

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