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Intense storm front blankets much of Greece with snow on Mon.; general 2-day holiday declared



A particularly intense snow storm throughout much of south-central Greece, beginning after noon on Monday, resulted in numerous closed roadways, downed power lines and an obligatory general holiday today, Tuesday.

The general holiday, affecting the private sector as well, was extended to Wednesday for the greater Athens area, the Dodecanese islands, the Cyclades isles and Crete.

Schools will also remain closed in much of the east Mediterranean island, with remote learning also suspended.

The most serious incident occurred on the privately-managed Attiki tollway, which arcs across northern Athens from east to west, and where some 3,500 people were stranded into the early morning hours in some 1,100 vehicles. Initially, military

personnel, police and volunteers handed out food, water and blankets to stranded motorists.

The mandatory use of snow chains, or tires, was still in place for much of Athens, as well.

Efforts to restore power were ongoing in Attica prefecture (greater Athens), as 53 lines were downed during the storm front, code-named “Elpis”, Greek for “hope”.

Ferry boats remained docked on Tuesday around harbors in greater Athens.

In large central Evia island, which straddles the eastern coast of Greece’s mainland, the snow storm was particularly intense, accompanied by lightning. As a result, lightning hit a cypress tree near the Holy Monastery of Panaghia Makrimallis at the Psahna site, causing a brief wildfire before being extinguished.