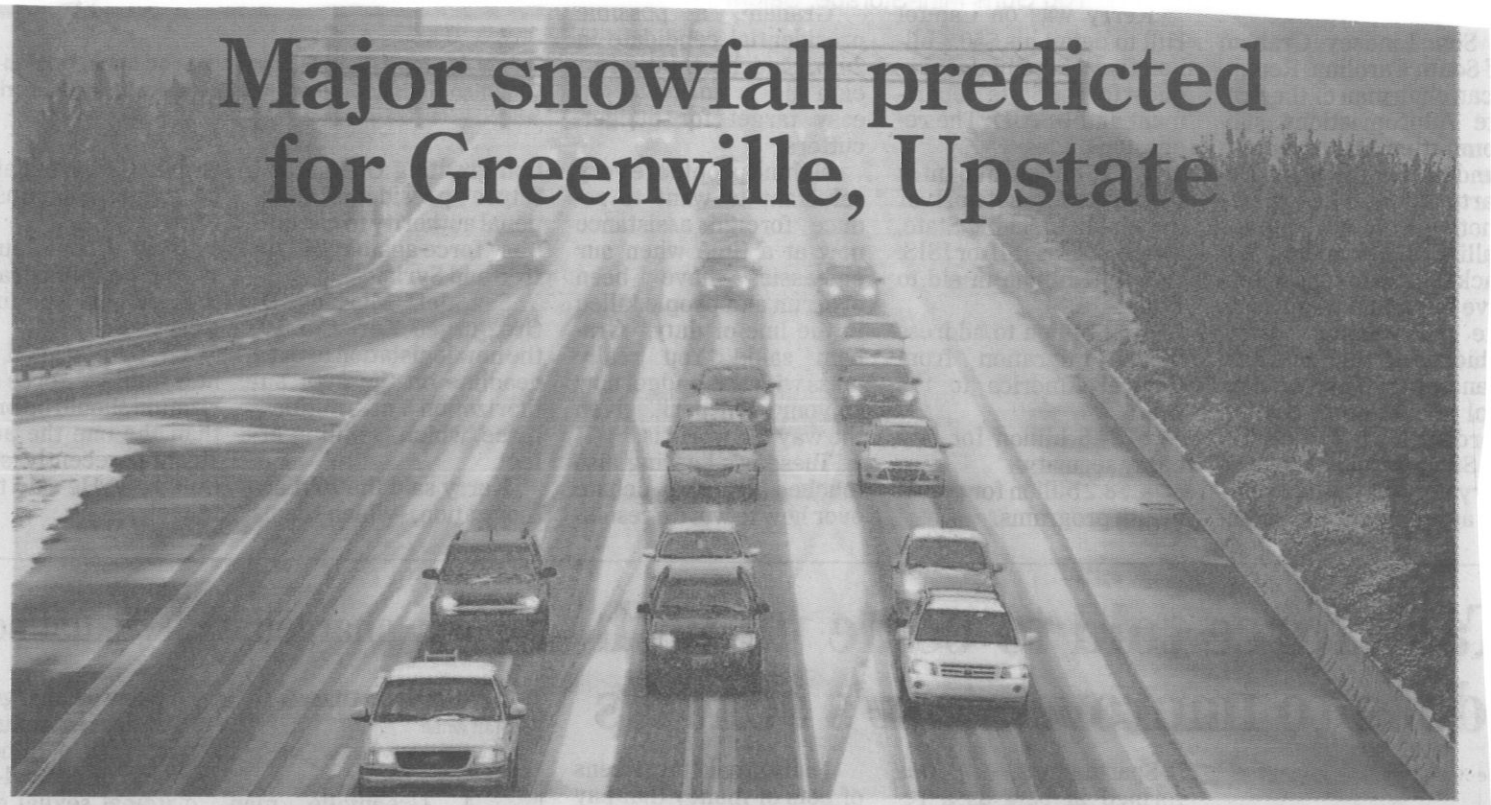
Major snowfall predicted for Greenville, Upstate



HEIDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

Some morning commuters were driving slower on Interstate 385 near Pleasantburg Drive as snow coated the roads on Tuesday.

By Romando Dixson
Staff writer
rdixson@greenvillenews.com

A major snowstorm is headed to the Upstate and bringing 3-7 inches of snow, according to the National Weather Service.

A winter storm warning is in effect from 4 p.m. today through 7 a.m. Thursday, the Weather Service said.

The impending snowfall comes on the heels of about an inch of snow that fell at Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport on Tuesday.

The Greenville area receives about 4 inches of snow per year, and this system moving in could dump that much or more on the Upstate.

"We're going to start out as rain, probably about 1 or 2 in the afternoon," Weather Service meteorologist Scott Krentz said. "But it's going to change over to snow about 7 or 8."

The state Legislature plans to take the day off Thursday because of the forecast, the Associated Press reported.

Schools in the Upstate, however, had not announced whether they would close Thursday.

With a snow day Tuesday, Greenville County Schools, exhausted the three makeup days built into its schedule.

If the forecast becomes a reality Wednesday night, the school district will likely have to determine when to make up the days in order to meet the mandated 180 instructional days.

Spokesman Oby Lyles said Tuesday that no decisions have been made about when those days would be made up.

"We'll wait until we get a better feeling of how many days we'll miss," he said, adding that the state Legislature has taken action to forgive days in the past.

Greenville and Pickens county schools were among the districts that made decisions early Tuesday morning to close for the day.

Most roads in Greenville city were clear, although snow covered U.S. 25 near the North Carolina line and caused the highway to shut down.

"Ideally, we like to make the decision the night before but sometimes that's not possible," Lyles said.

Upstate DOT officials started gearing up for the snowstorm Tuesday and will continue preparing into today.

Road crews hoped to do some pretreatment today, although that may not be possible if it rains a lot.

Jason Allison, district maintenance engineer for Greenville, Pickens, Spartanburg and Oconee counties, urged residents to stock up for the things they may need while it snows.

"If they know they need something Thursday, they need to go get it Wednesday and stay off the roads Wednesday night and most of Thursday," he said.

THREE-DAY FORECAST

Wednesday: High near 43 with 40 percent chance of rain and snow during the day. Rain and snow likely at night, with snow accumulation of 3-7 inches. Low around 30.

Thursday: Cloudy with a high near 43 and low around 28. A slight chance of rain and snow.

Friday: Partly sunny with a high near 44 and low around 26.

Source: National Weather Service.