

Boston snow still melting in man-made glacier of ice and trash



One of many snow piles in Boston. Note the size of car in relation to height of snow.

During Boston's record-breaking snowfall this past winter, officials used large empty parking lots that were devoted for one thing: snow piles. Officials called them "snow farms" and they rose to heights unseen in modern history. And now, in the sweltering heat of summer, one is still sitting in South Boston, dripping away and revealing a vast wasteland of trash underneath. When WBZ (CBS News) Boston went to check on the man-made glacier yesterday, what they found in that still-melting pile of snow was a bit of a shocker: a baby stroller, lottery tickets, part of a bicycle, laundry baskets, hubcaps, and more.

That's because the snow plows picked up virtually everything in their paths, which prevented them from simply depositing all

that winter snow into the harbor. Ton after ton was moved from the city streets of Boston to this snow farm, where piles towered over 20 feet. It was one of seven such piles scattered throughout the city and this one still has snow left on it.

Even though the state gave "snow-buried cities and towns in Massachusetts permission to dump snow into the ocean, due to emergency situations," Boston decided it had better not. Also in the man-made glacier were piles of uncollected garbage, trashcans, even fire hydrants. Experts think the snow pile will still be around, at least until August.

All told, from the start of the winter season to the very end, Boston received a record

110.6 inches of snow (which even the global warming experts have said is NOT supposed to happen, until it does). Much of it was due to a continuous stream of frigid air channeling down from the Arctic and colliding with the warmer air of the lower 48 states.

Week after week Boston was hit by blizzards, with literally no rain or warm temps to help melt the snow away. As the plows moved the snow to these farms, they piled up, became compacted, and turned what was once a light fluffy snow into a glacial mess of grand proportions.

Mix into the mix a very dry spring, not enough warm days, and you have a well insulated pile of, er, crap. And a very large one at that. Ice cubes on a kitchen counter will melt quickly if left apart. Put those same ice cubes in a bag and then on the counter and you have a much different story. For all the science behind the snow farms, check out this companion piece at WBZ-Boston.

According to Bruce Berman of Save the Harbor Save the Bay, "Everything you see there was on the streets when the snows hit. None of it went into Boston Harbor, which is a terrific thing." The city of Boston also has a twitter contest on how long the snow will remain before it all melts. Enter using the hashtag #BosMeltNow.