

Hurricane Sandy
By Shanna Smith

Hurricane Sandy was viewed by Massachusetts students as an exciting and rare storm that caused the benign cancellation of schools throughout the country. There were dozens of posts on Facebook and Twitter praising Sandy for causing a state of emergency, which forced the superintendent to cancel schools on Monday and/or Tuesday. However, this positive outlook on the storm is not only inaccurate but ignorant. While Massachusetts teenagers enjoyed their days off from school relaxing and essentially treating Sandy like a joke, other Americans' lives were severely ruined.

What teenagers fail to realize is that people lost their lives because of Sandy. More than 140 deaths were recorded as of November 3, a third of these occurring in New York City. Some may shrug and conclude that a great number of people die each day, so this is no big deal. However, what most people do not comprehend is that one death does not only affect one person. A single death affects one's entire family, thus these 140 deaths effect 140 *families*. And these are merely the deaths recorded; it is extremely probable that even more people were killed. Imagine if you lost, for example, your uncle in this storm. You probably would not be rejoiced that your weekend was one or two days longer.

Although Sandy only affected Massachusetts for about two days, the rest of the country was not so lucky. According to CNN, "there were over 7.5 million power outages throughout Hurricane Sandy's two-day life on land." These power outages may take one to two weeks to resolve! Because of this and the flooding, states in the mid-Atlantic were forced to postpone Halloween. Even when Halloween does occur (about a week or so after its original date), all participants will be required to return home by seven o'clock. This essentially ruins Halloween for an entire region of our country. Also, this seven o'clock curfew will persist until it is safe to travel at night again; therefore it will continue to affect mid-Atlantic residents for quite some time.

If this is not bad enough, the economy was severely affected by the hurricane. First of all, the damage from Sandy is estimated to cost \$50 billion, according to Moody's Analytics. The economic damage will not only come from the costs of damage. The 7.5 billion power outages resulted in the cancellation of not only school but businesses as well. The closure of businesses and cancellation of work can have a massive effect on the economy. This combined with the \$50 billion of damage-repair may also affect Massachusetts.

So we may not have come out of the Hurricane unscathed after all. Loved ones were lost because of Sandy's harsh winds, massive waves (some as tall as almost 40 feet!), and the storm surge from New Jersey to New York. Especially in these two states, families' homes were either destroyed or severely damaged. And even those who did not experience familial deaths are

currently being hurt by the power outages, flooding, and repair costs. While Massachusetts teenagers are long over the effects of Hurricane Sandy, the mid-Atlantic is still suffering them.

And this leads me to ask: was Sandy really worth missing that one day of school?

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