

Storms Lash Arctic-Bering Coasts; Endanger Shishmaref Oil Supplies

The village of Shishmaref is considering plans to relocate as the result of a severe storm this week that drastically reduced waterfront footage. The shoreline is now only eight feet from the winter fuel supply and if more bad weather follows, 40,000 gallons of fuel oil will be endangered.

Don Lowell, Alaska Disaster Office, reports it will cost an estimated \$8,000 to \$10,000 to move the fuel and villagers are meeting this week with the Department of Community and Regional Affairs to decide what action to take.

The storm, with winds gusting up to 50 knots, lashed the

Bering Coast from Unalakleet to Barrow on Saturday, dumping salt into the Unalakleet water supply and causing villagers to take to the high ground.

Airports at Cape Lisbourne and the Naval Petroleum Reserve at Barrow were reported under water. Barrow roads washed out and minor damage was reported at Kotzebue, Teller and Koyuk.

The storm was preceded by a period of unusually warm weather and the ice pack, which usually keeps high seas down, drifted more than 500 miles off the coast.

The phenomenon seems to be

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a repeat of conditions in 1963 when winter storms took out the entire Barrow waterfront and contaminated the village water supply.

Weather watchers note winds are subsiding and temperatures are growing comfortably colder, but the ice pack is still drifting too far off shore to protect the Bering and Arctic coasts.