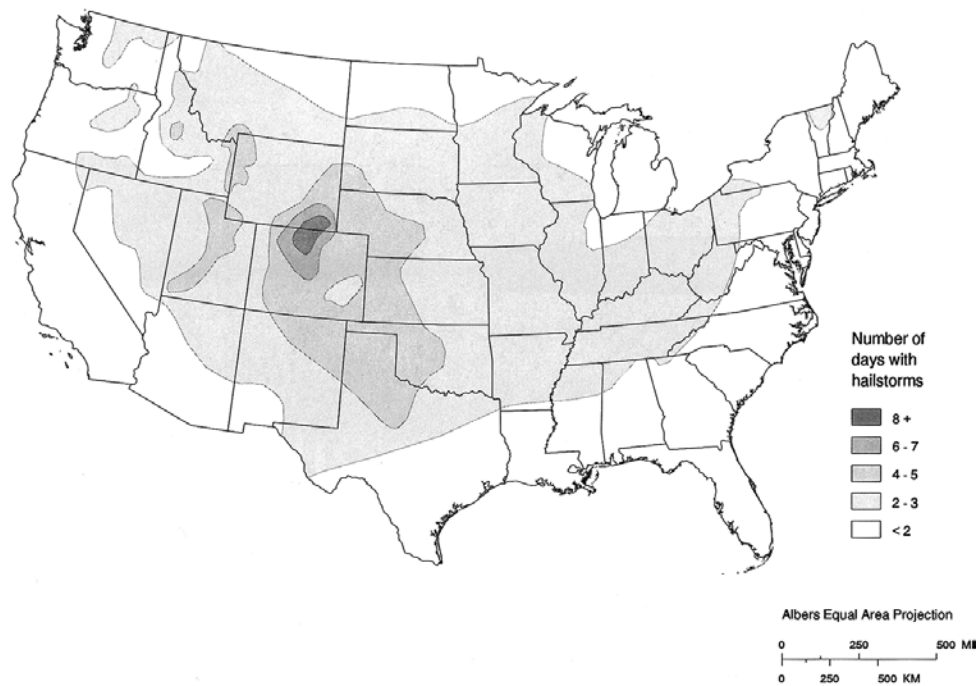


Hail

Hail falls most commonly in Colorado and southern Wyoming. However, it has been recorded in every state in the union. The costs of hail damage in Colorado alone in the last decade have been approximately \$1 billion. Hail is the result of rapid up drafting of water, which freezes. As the ice crystals consolidate, they eventually become too heavy to remain suspended so they fall. Large hail (hydrometeors) is the result of rapid rising of water to great heights. As the water rises into areas of low temperature, it freezes and generates crystals. The crystals increase in size until they can no longer be held buoyant, at which stage they fall to the ground. Hail falls at high speeds and is very destructive. Large hailstones can reach several inches in diameter and can fall at speeds of up to 100 mph. These are extremely dangerous and have been known to snap 2-by-4-inch lumber posts on impact.

Hail damages crops, buildings, and equipment. It can injure people and animals. An easy guideline on whether severe damage has occurred to buildings, equipment, and living beings is to see whether trees and plants have sustained damages. If plants and trees have been damaged, the chances are high that roofs and equipment have been damaged too.



Annual frequency of hailstorms in the United States. (From Federal Emergency Management Agency: *Multi-hazard identification and risk assessment: a cornerstone of the national mitigation strategy*, Washington, DC, 1997, FEMA.)