Early season snowfall often hits heavily and swiftly and can present great challenges for drivers. After such a snowfall the AccuWeather Forensics Team was called upon to investigate the weather conditions at the scene of a chain reaction auto accident. The driver of the first vehicle slid into the vehicle in front.

The accident occurred on a major interstate highway in the northeast part of the nation during the late autumn months. The weather was unusually warm in the weeks prior to the accident, but turned sharply colder on the day of the incident.

After analyzing cloud photographs, radars, and regional surface observations, the AccuWeather Forensics Team found that indeed heavy snow showers had formed upstream of the incident site minutes earlier and had traversed the stretch of highway around the time of the accident. The team found that the visibility was briefly under 1/8 of a mile and it was snowing hard enough at the time of the incident to temporarily create slippery and slushy conditions on untreated road surfaces.

The officer investigating the incident arrived minutes after the accident time and had reported that the roadway at that time was only wet. The AccuWeather Forensics Team found that warm ground conditions in the recent weeks caused the snow to melt quickly after the snow shower had ceased. The charges filed against the driver that first caused the accident were reduced.