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Iowa State University 'Icing Research Tunnel' Could Improve Deicing Technology

Source: The Gazette
Created: February 14, 2014

Experiments will analyze the thickness of ice as it flows over an aircraft wing, the heat transfer of individual water droplets as they freeze, the speed of freezing rain on a wing or blade and the patterns of ice formation.

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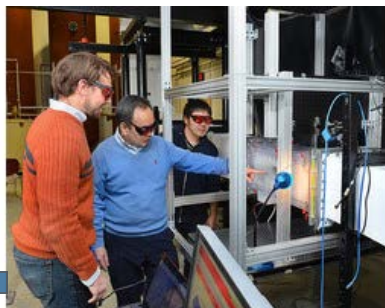


Photo by Bob Elbert.

Rye Waldman, Hui Hu and Kai Zhang, left to right, work with the Iowa State University Icing Research Tunnel.

Using a **newly refurbished "icing research tunnel,"** Iowa State University researchers are digging deeper into the physics behind ice buildup on airplanes and wind turbine blades with the goal of improving preparations for winter weather – not just locally but nationwide.

Iowa State's icing wind tunnel is one of only a few like it in the nation and the only one being used for research in a university setting, according to Hui Hu, an ISU professor of aerospace engineering who is leading the wind tunnel research. It's been fully functional for only a few weeks following a three-year effort to renovate the 20-year-old wind tunnel, donated by the Goodrich Corporation.

It can operate at minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit with wind speeds reaching 220 mph. And it can manifest everything from frozen fog to "wet glaze ice," according to ISU News Service.

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