“How did you learn to fly in ice?” asked Cessna course developer Steve McNew. “Flying a Baron over the southern Appalachians,” I answered, to which McNew replied, “It’s always on-the-job training, isn’t it?”

Cessna is working to change that. Since 1996 Cessna has offered the Caravan Cold Weather Course (CCWC), a three-hour traveling seminar designed specifically to educate pilots on the hazards of icing. The FARs have endorsements for high performance, high altitude, tailwheel, complex, etc., but there has never been an endorsement for flight in icing conditions. The CCWC fills this niche. Now offered as an online course facilitated by the University of North Dakota, Cessna tracks all who complete the program and claims that, since 1996, it has never had a fatality resulting from an ice encounter for anyone who has taken this course.

CCWC consists of five modules: two on basic weather information and three on performance effects of airframe ice, as expected oriented specifically to pilots of the C208. Specifically, CCWC details:

- Weather systems conducive to different types and intensities of ice.
- Aerodynamic effects of ice on lift, drag, thrust and weight.
- Operation of the Caravan in ice, including:
  - Minimum icing airspeeds
  - Flaps, and when not to use them
  - Autopilots, and when not to use them
  - How and when to cycle deice boots
  - Weight and altitude restrictions in icing conditions
  - Performance degradation and drift-down with a load of ice

You don’t need to be a Caravan pilot to benefit from CCWC. To enroll go to www.cessnalearning.com and select “Online course.” Complete the data blocks and Cessna will review your application—they have to do a Homeland Security check on all students seeking this instruction.

After the check is complete (usually a 24-hour turn-around) you’ll receive an email with instructions for paying the $50 tuition. Once that’s complete you’ll get a log-in and password to access the CCWC. You can also find a schedule and enroll in the “live” traveling ground school from the E-learning Web site if you prefer.