Currier & Ives Village Snow Tutorial

By Lesley Allen

You need:

- Styrofoam insulation panels from home center.
  4’ x 8’ x 2”, or packs of 6 panels that are 48” x 13” x ¾ “.
- Fiberfill (what you put in pillows or stuffed animals)
- Brown paper, dark blue paper
- Textured plastic panels for ice-covered ponds
- Water Effects (from Woodland Scenics – see model railroad supplies)
- Paints (water-based craft paints)
- Snow blankets (the thin ones, come in rolls)
- Floral pins, straight pins with white heads
- Sharp kitchen knives

The base is 2” thick Styrofoam insulation boards, held above the table top on 2” “joists”.

Electric cords drop through holes in the styro and run under the styro.

Styro (2” or ¾”) is cut into shape with a sharp kitchen knife and layered to make the elevations. The styro layers can be cut quite roughly; more will happen! You could glue them together but I like to use floral pins (like long-legged staples) to hold them in place – that way I can adjust them if I need to.
The red boxes show printouts of the Currier & Ives print I was reproducing.

The base for the water is painted on dark blue cardboard, to make lighter areas at the edges and rocks under the water. You see the base in the photo above. It is covered with a textured plastic panel that is sold for use in fluorescent lighting fixtures. Mine is from Lowes in a pattern called “Cracked Ice”. You can see that clearly in the 2nd photo above (where the blue base hasn’t been painted yet).

Here is the result! See the rock under the ice in the center front.

Roads are just brown paper!

Notice at the edges of the styro layers, I have started to place some fiber-fill stuffing – just rolled small amounts into strips or logs. This softens the edges of the elevations, and also (see left side) creates snowbanks.

When your base is done, with lights for the buildings strung up through holes as above, lay the snow blankets loosely over the base. Cut as necessary to fit the landscape, leaving extra all around. Cut X where lights need to come through. Tuck edges of snow blanket under the styro at the banks of the water.

Now the fun part … nudge the snow blankets and the fiberfill logs into place, and pin into place with the white-headed pins. This holds the snow across the road and forms it to the landscape. Look closely at the following photos and you can see the white pin heads.

Also a good shot of the cracked-ice panel above. I painted the bases of the skaters silver as the best way to blend them in (who skates on blobs of snow?)

Pin-heads pointed out in red circles below…

Don’t line pins up directly opposite each other – stagger them. That creates a realistic drifted look.

Dirty snow in the barnyards is fine turf or blended turf from Woodland Scenics. Sprayed it with Scenic Cement to keep it from blowing off!

http://woodlandscenics.woodlandscenics.com/show/category/BlendedTurf/

Now these shots are from a Victorian village-

The cobblestone pavement is Lemax cobblestone road. It looks too “plasticy” as it comes so I dabbed it with paints to dull it and make it more variegated.

Then I painted Scenic Cement where I wanted the light snow to be, sprinkled the fine snow on and blew it into the glue.


Boarding
& Lodging
School

Back to Currier & Ives - The waterfall is vertical layers of styro painted to look like rocks with snow.

The water is created with Water Effects from Woodland Scenics. Their website has good tutorials –

http://woodlandscenics.woodlandscenics.com/show/video/MakeWaterfall

I used a mirror to squirt the goop on. Let it dry overnight. Peel it off the mirror; paint the back (smooth) side of the strips if you want. Layer the strips on the rocks (the strips will stick to each other) until you have enough.

After the waterfall was complete and placed on the plastic-panel water below, I added “splash” at the bottom with Water Effects. I hid little spotlights (red box, 2nd photo) in the edges of the banks opposite to light it.