

...TORNADO CONFIRMED NEAR SANFORD...BROADWAY...HOLLY SPRINGS AND RALEIGH IN LEE AND WAKE COUNTIES COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA...

LOCATION...SANFORD...BROADWAY...HOLLY SPRINGS AND RALEIGH IN LEE AND WAKE COUNTIES COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

DATE...APRIL 16, 2011

ESTIMATED TIME...253 PM EDT

MAXIMUM EF-SCALE RATING...EF3

ESTIMATED MAXIMUM WIND SPEED...160 MPH

MAXIMUM PATH WIDTH...0.3 MILES

MILES PATH LENGTH...APPROXIMATELY 63 MILES

BEGINNING LAT/LON...35.34N / 79.31W

ENDING LAT/LON...35.93N / 78.46W

* FATALITIES...6

* INJURIES...TOTAL NUMBER UNKNOWN

* THE INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE PENDING FINAL REVIEW OF THE EVENT(S) AND PUBLICATION IN NWS STORM DATA.

...SUMMARY...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN RALEIGH NC HAS CONFIRMED A TORNADO NEAR SANFORD...BROADWAY...HOLLY SPRINGS AND RALEIGH IN LEE AND WAKE COUNTIES COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA ON APRIL 16, 2011.

AT 253 PM EDT ON SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2011...A SUPERCELL THUNDERSTORM PRODUCED A TORNADO THAT TOUCHED DOWN IN NORTHEASTERN MOORE COUNTY WEST OF CAMERON NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF RED HILL ROAD AND GILCHRIST ROAD. THE INITIAL TORNADO TOUCHDOWN INTENSITY WAS EF0. THE TORNADO STRENGTHENED TO AN EF1 AS IT CROSSED HIGHWAY 1 NEAR WILDLIFE ROAD BLOWING A SINGLE WIDE TRAILER OFF ITS FOUNDATION AND DAMAGING ANOTHER HOME NEXT DOOR. TORNADO CONTINUED TO INTENSIFY TO EF3 ALONG LEMON SPRINGS ROAD STRIKING THE ST ANDREWS SUBDIVISION. ONE FATALITY OCCURRED IN A VEHICLE ALONG LEMON SPRINGS ROAD. NUMEROUS HOMES WERE COMPLETELY DESTROYED AND SEVERAL TWO STORY HOMES HAD THEIR UPPER FLOORS REMOVED. WIND SPEEDS WERE ESTIMATED AT 140 MPH WITH A PATH LENGTH OF OVER A QUARTER MILE. ADDITIONAL HOMES WERE BLOWN OFF THEIR FOUNDATION ON CEMETERY DRIVE.

CONTINUING NORTHEAST ALONG CAMERON DRIVE...THE UPPER FLOOR WAS BLOWN OFF TWO APARTMENT BUILDINGS. THE TORNADO THEN ENTERED AN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX ALONG INDUSTRIAL DR WHERE IT MULTIPLE STEEL CONSTRUCTED RETAIL BUILDINGS WERE DESTROYED IN ADDITION TO AT LEAST THREE LARGE WAREHOUSES AT THE STATIC CONTROL FACILITY. WINDS IN THIS AREA LIKELY EXCEEDED 160 MPH. THE TORNADO THEN DESTROYED THE TRACTOR SUPPLY COMPANY... BIG LOTS... AND LOWES HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE ALONG HIGHWAY 421. WINDS IN THIS AREA WERE ESTIMATED AROUND 140 MPH. TWO HOMES WERE BLOWN OFF THEIR FOUNDATIONS ALONG RICE RD NORTH OF HIGHWAY 42. A FATALITY OCCURRED ALONG POPLAR SPRING CHURCH ROAD IN A MOBILE HOME. THE TORNADO CONTINUED NORTHEAST ALONG AVENT FERRY ROAD CROSSING INTO CHATHAM COUNTY JUST EAST OF HARRIS LAKE.

THE TORNADO WEAKENED TO EF-0 AS IT APPROACHED HOLLY SPRINGS. THERE WAS MULTIPLE TREE AND ROOF DAMAGE ALONG AVENT FERRY ROAD SOUTHWEST OF HOLLY SPRINGS. THE TORNADO INTENSIFIED TO EF-1 WITH WINDS OF 86 MPH AS IT REACHED THE FIRE STATION NUMBER TWO AND THE HOLLY GLENN

SUBDIVISION BEFORE CROSSING HIGHWAY 55 AND TRACKING THROUGH THE REMINGTON DEVELOPMENT.

THE TORNADO CONTINUED TO TRACK NORTHEASTWARD AND CAUSE EXTENSIVE TREE DAMAGE AND DAMAGE TO NUMEROUS HOMES MAINLY FROM FALLEN TREES ACROSS PIERCE OLIVE ROAD...TEN-TEN ROAD NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF LAWDRAKER ROAD AND THE HALSTEAD SUBDIVISION...AND PENNY ROAD AT HUNTERS BLUFF SUBDIVISION...BETWEEN 340 AND 345 PM. THE TORNADO THEN TRACKED NEAR THE NORTHWESTERN TIP OF LAKE WHEELER...AND CROSSED OLDE SOUTH AND YATES MILL POND ROADS...INCLUDING THE OAKTON AND OLDE MILL FOREST SUBDIVISIONS. TORNADO INTENSITY THROUGH THESE AREAS AVERAGED EF-1...WITH WINDS AROUND 100 MPH.

AT APPROXIMATELY 350 PM AN EF-1 TORNADO...WITH WINDS GREATER THAN 100 MPH...TRACKED NORTHEAST ACROSS TRYON ROAD...BETWEEN LAKE WHEELER ROAD AND THE RALEIGH GOLF ASSOCIATION GOLF COURSE. SEVERAL HOMES ALONG TRYON ROAD SUSTAINED DAMAGE FROM FALLEN TREES AS THE THE TORNADO PROCEEDED NORTHEAST SNAPPING TREES THROUGH A HEAVILY WOODED AREA ON THE WESTERN PERIPHERY OF THE VILLAGE OF TRYON SUBDIVISION.

THE TORNADO THEN TRACKED NORTHEAST ACROSS THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, PRODUCING EF-1 DAMAGE IN A NARROW WIDTH OF BETWEEN 25 AND OCCASIONALLY 70 YARDS. IT CROSSED DIRECTLY OVER INTERSTATES 40/440 BETWEEN EXITS 297 AND 298 (LAKE WHEELER AND SOUTH SAUNDERS) MOVING INTO THE SOUTHERN PART OF RALEIGH. HERE EXTENSIVE SEVERE TREE DAMAGE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INTERSTATE WAS CLEARLY VISIBLE.

THE TORNADO CONTINUED NORTHEAST ACROSS SOUTH SAUNDERS STREET WHERE FOUR BUSINESSES WERE DAMAGED. A BODY SHOP HAD THE MOST SEVERE DAMAGE WHEN THE ROOF WAS COMPLETELY RIPPED OFF AND THE SIDE WALLS COLLAPSED. THE TORNADO CONTINUED TO SNAP HARDWOOD TREES AND POWER-LINES ACROSS MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY AND NEARBY HOMES.

AS THE TORNADO CONTINUED NORTHEAST TOWARDS SHAW UNIVERSITY...IT APPEARED THE TORNADO WEAKENED WITH MOST DOWNED TREES HAVING BEEN UPROOTED. DORMITORIES AND THE STUDENT CENTER ON CAMPUS HAD WINDOWS BLOWN IN WITH ROOF DAMAGE. THE TORNADO MOVED NORTHEAST ALONG THE EAST SIDE OF THE MAJOR HIGH RISE BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN RALEIGH DOWNING HUNDREDS OF TREES...MANY OF WHICH FELL ON HOUSES IN THE DENSELY POPULATED AREAS EAST OF DOWNTOWN. THE HISTORIC OAKWOOD TO LION`S PARK SECTIONS OF TOWN...INCLUDING THE HISTORIC OAKWOOD CEMETERY WERE HARDEST HIT. ALSO IN THE PATH OF THE TORNADO WAS SAINT AUGUSTINE`S COLLEGE...WHICH SUSTAINED ROOF DAMAGE TO EVERY BUILDING ON CAMPUS. THE TORNADO CONTINUED TO DOWN TREES ON MANY HOMES AS IT PUSHED ACROSS NORTH KING CHARLES ROAD TO YONKERS ROAD WHERE IT PRODUCED EF-1 DAMAGE TO SEVERAL BUSINESSES NEAR THE INTERSECTIONS OF YONKERS ROAD AND RALEIGH BLVD.

THE TORNADO CROSSED THE 440 BELTLINE FOR A SECOND TIME...THIS TIME ON THE NORTHEAST SIDE OF DOWNTOWN RALEIGH NEAR THE INTERSECTIONS OF WESTINGHOUSE AND BRENTWOOD ROADS. EF-1 DAMAGE WAS OBSERVED AT SEVERAL BUSINESSES...INCLUDING THE RALEIGH ICEPLEX.

THE TORNADO STRENGTHENED TO AN EF-2 WITH WINDS GREATER THAN 110 MPH AS IT CONTINUED NORTHEAST PRODUCING EXTENSIVE TREE DAMAGE IN AN APPROXIMATE 100 YARD WIDE PATH FROM STONY BROOK DRIVE TO BUFFALO

ROAD. SNAPPED TREES CRASHED ONTO AND THROUGH NUMEROUS HOMES ALL ALONG THE PATH. IT IS IN THIS AREA WHERE 3 FATALITIES WERE REPORTED WHEN TWO MOBILE HOMES WERE THROWN 30 TO 50 FEET WHEN THE TIE DOWNS SNAPPED FROM THEIR ANCHOR POINTS. NEARLY ALL OF THE MOBILE HOMES IN THE PARK SUSTAINED SOME TYPE OF DAMAGE.

THE EF-2 TORNADO CONTINUED TO MOVE NORTHEAST ACROSS BUFFALO ROAD NEAR THE CARDINAL GROVE SUBDIVISION. SEVERAL TWO STORY HOMES WERE COMPLETELY DESTROYED WITH NUMEROUS OTHER HOMES SUSTAINING MODERATE TO MAJOR DAMAGE.

DAMAGE CONSISTENT WITH AN EF-2 TORNADO CONTINUED WITH WIDESPREAD DAMAGE IN A 150 YARD WIDE SWATH ALONG FORESTVILLE ROAD. A COUPLE OF MOBILE HOMES WERE DESTROYED AND SEVERAL TWO STORY HOMES SUFFERED EXTENSIVE ROOF DAMAGE...WITH CONTINUED NUMEROUS SNAPPED TREES ON HOUSES.

THE TORNADO WEAKENED OR LIFTED AS IT MOVED NORTHEAST TOWARDS ROLESVILLE. DAMAGE BECAME VERY SPORADIC AND ISOLATED IN NATURE AS IT CROSSED THE WAKE AND FRANKLIN COUNTY LINE.

THIS INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE AT WEATHER.GOV/RAH.

SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO LEE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT...THE SANFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT...HOLLY SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT AND WAKE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR ASSISTANCE WITH THE SURVEYS.

FOR REFERENCE...THE ENHANCED FUJITA SCALE CLASSIFIES TORNADOES INTO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

- EF0...WIND SPEEDS 65 TO 85 MPH.
- EF1...WIND SPEEDS 86 TO 110 MPH.
- EF2...WIND SPEEDS 111 TO 135 MPH.
- EF3...WIND SPEEDS 136 TO 165 MPH.
- EF4...WIND SPEEDS 166 TO 200 MPH.
- EF5...WIND SPEEDS GREATER THAN 200 MPH.

Photo 1 (Mobile home destroyed near Wildlife Road)



Photo 2 (Residential damage in the St. Andrews subdivision in Sanford)



Photo 3 (Warehouse destroyed on Industrial Drive in Sanford)



Photo 4 (Damage to businesses along South Saunders Street in Raleigh)



Photo 5 (Vehicle damage in the Cardinal Grove subdivision in northeast Raleigh)

