

Western Kentucky Tornadoes of January 3, 2000

Total tornado damage was around 70 million dollars, and 22 persons were injured.

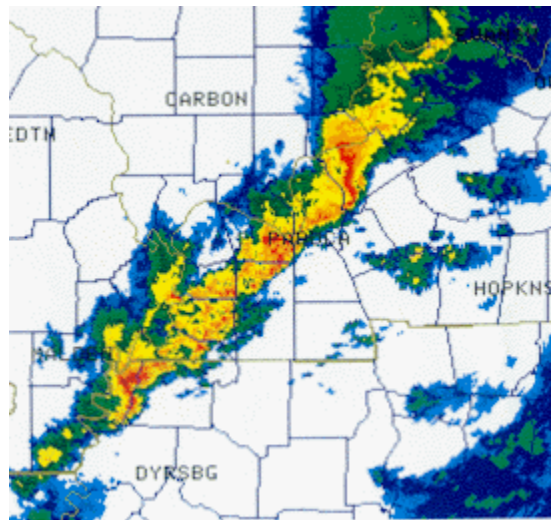
Two F-3 tornadoes struck northwest Kentucky late in the afternoon of January 3. Owensboro, Kentucky sustained the most severe damage and the greatest number of injuries. Revised damage figures now show about 100 homes were destroyed, another 700 received major damage, and a total of roughly 2,000 homes received at least minor damage. About 18 persons were injured. The most seriously injured person received broken vertebrae and multiple lacerations.

Owensboro Tornado Damage Photos: (photos courtesy of Rick Shanklin, NWS Paducah).

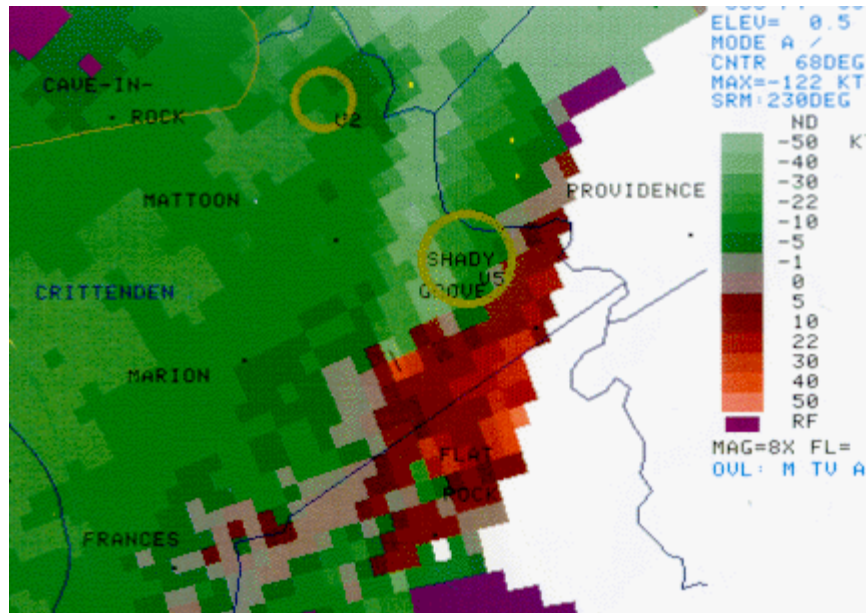


The other F-3 tornado occurred about midway between Paducah and Owensboro, in the counties of Crittenden and Webster. The Crittenden/Webster County tornado occurred between 3 and 3:30 P.M., followed by the Owensboro tornado shortly after 4 P.M. CST. The path of the Crittenden/Webster County tornado was about 15 miles long and stretched from Crayne to Diamond. Both Crayne and Diamond sustained severe damage, with around 100 homes damaged or destroyed there. There were just a handful of injuries in this sparsely populated area.

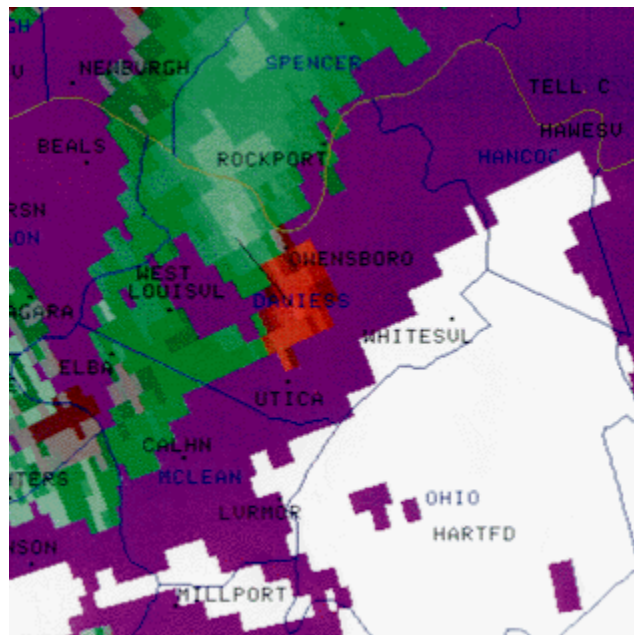
Crittenden/Webster County Damage Photos



The first two radar images were produced by the Paducah doppler radar at 3:05 P.M. CST, just a few minutes before the tornado touched down in the community of Crayne in Crittenden County. The left image is a base reflectivity image taken at the 1.5 degree elevation angle of the radar. The tornadic cell is observed about 30 miles northeast of Paducah in western Crittenden County. Another severe thunderstorm cell along the line is visible over extreme northwest Tennessee, about 70 miles southwest of Paducah. Movement of all the storm cells was northeast at 60 MPH.



Ten minutes later, at 3:15 P.M. CST, the rotation in the thunderstorm showed up much more clearly. The storm relative motion image from the lowest elevation angle of the radar is shown below. By this time, the tornado was on the ground, just a few miles southwest of Shady Grove. Green or "cool" colors represent air motion toward the radar, while red colors represent motion away from the radar. Where a couplet of red and green colors exist, rotation is frequently present. The purple area represents regions where the radar is sensing precipitation, but is unable to determine whether motion is toward or away from the radar.



The last radar image is a storm relative motion image of the Owensboro storm, taken at 4:05 P.M., just one minute before the tornado touchdown. The radar is at its lowest elevation angle. Notice the apparent rotation just entering Owensboro from the southwest.

Damage survey reports (issued as Public Information Statements) are available for the following events that also occurred on January 3:

CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY MO WIND EVENT:

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PADUCAH KY

530 PM CST MON JAN 3 2000

...NWS DAMAGE SURVEY FOR CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY MISSOURI...

AN NWS METEOROLOGIST FROM THE PADUCAH OFFICE SURVEYED DAMAGE IN SOUTHERN CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY MONDAY AFTERNOON. THE SURVEY...

WHICH WAS COORDINATED WITH THE CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR...YIELDED THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT TYPE: DOWNBURST

WIND ESTIMATE: 90 TO 100 MPH

DAMAGE PATH: APPROXIMATELY 1/2 MILE WIDE BY 2 MILES LONG

DAMAGE: 6 MOBILE HOMES/TRAVEL TRAILORS DAMAGED/DESTROYED.

2 HOMES DAMAGED.

1 BUSINESS WITH MAJOR DAMAGE, 2 WITH MINOR.

INJURIES: 3 INJURIES

TIME: APPROXIMATELY 9:00 AM

SHANKLIN

MARION/CARBONDALE IL WIND EVENT:

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PADUCAH KY

730 PM CST MON JAN 3 2000

...NWS DAMAGE SURVEY FOR JACKSON AND WILLIAMSON COUNTIES IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS...

AN NWS METEOROLOGIST FROM THE PADUCAH OFFICE SURVEYED DAMAGE IN EAST JACKSON AND NORTHWEST WILLIAMSON COUNTIES MONDAY AFTERNOON.

THE SURVEY YIELDED THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT TYPE: DOWNBURST

WIND ESTIMATE: 130 MPH EAST JACKSON

80 TO 90 MPH NORTHWEST WILLIAMSON

DAMAGE PATH: APPROXIMATELY 1 MILE WIDE BY 5 MILES LONG

DAMAGE: 1 BRICK HOME DESTROYED

1 WOOD FRAME SEVERELY DAMAGED

SEVERAL HOMES PARTIALLY DAMAGED FROM FALLEN TREES

SEVERAL HOMES WITH PARTS OF ROOFS RIPPED OFF

NUMEROUS OUT BUILDINGS DESTROYED

INJURIES: NONE REPORTED

PAUL W

OWENSBORO KY TORNADO :

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PADUCAH KY

318 PM CST TUE JAN 4 2000

...NWS DAMAGE SURVEY FOR DAVIESS COUNTY IN NORTHWEST KENTUCKY...

THE WARNING COORDINATION METEOROLOGIST FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN PADUCAH SURVEYED DAMAGE IN DAVIESS COUNTY THIS MORNING.

THE SURVEY YIELDED THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT TYPE: F-3 TORNADO

WIND ESTIMATE: 180 MPH

DAMAGE PATH: APPROXIMATELY 1/2 MILE WIDE BY 7 MILES LONG

MOST PREDOMINATE DAMAGE FROM ROME TO THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN OWENSBORO

DAMAGE: 750 HOMES DAMAGED OF WHICH 200-300 WERE SEVERELY DAMAGED AND 50 WERE TOTALLED

DOZENS OF BUSINESSES

DAMAGED OR DESTROYED

APPROXIMATELY 20,000 PEOPLE STILL WITHOUT POWER

PRELIMINARY DOLLAR ESTIMATE IS WELL INTO THE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

INJURIES: PRESS AND MAYOR SAY 18 INJURED - 2 CRITICAL

TIME: APPROXIMATELY 4:06 PM

FIRST PUBLIC CALL OF TORNADO DAMAGE AT 4:10 PM

TORNADO WARNING HAD BEEN ISSUED AT 3:43 PM

LEAD TIME WAS 23 MINUTES

CRITTENDEN/WEBSTER COUNTY KY TORNADO :

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PADUCAH KY

438 PM CST TUE JAN 4 2000

...NWS DAMAGE SURVEY FOR CRITTENDEN AND WEBSTER COUNTIES IN NORTHWEST KENTUCKY...

A METEOROLOGIST FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN PADUCAH SURVEYED DAMAGE IN CRITTENDEN AND WEBSTER COUNTIES THIS AFTERNOON.

THE SURVEY YIELDED THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT TYPE: F-3 TORNADO

WIND ESTIMATE: 160 MPH

DAMAGE PATH: APPROXIMATELY 1/4 MILE WIDE BY 15 MILES LONG

PATH LENGTH ESTIMATED FROM MAP

BEGAN NEAR CRAYNE (SOUTH OF MARION) IN CRITTENDEN COUNTY AND RAN PARALLEL TO THE CRITTENDEN/CALDWELL

COUNTY LINE TO DIAMOND IN WEBSTER COUNTY

DAMAGE: 100 HOMES DAMAGED OR DESTROYED

MANY OUTBUILDINGS AND BARNS DESTROYED

DAMAGE ESTIMATES UNDETERMINED AT THIS TIME

INJURIES: 3 MINOR INJURIES

TIME: APPROXIMATELY 3:10 PM

JANUARY 3, 2000

TIME ESTIMATED FROM RADAR

EVANSVILLE IN WIND EVENT:

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PADUCAH KY

1002 PM CST TUE JAN 4 2000

...NWS DAMAGE SURVEY FOR VANDERBURGH COUNTY/CITY OF EVANSVILLE INDIANA...

A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN PADUCAH SURVEYED DAMAGE IN THE CITY OF EVANSVILLE THIS AFTERNOON.

THE SURVEY YIELDED THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT TYPE: DOWNBURST WIND (STRAIGHT-LINE)

WIND ESTIMATE: 70-75 MPH

DAMAGE PATH: LOCATION OF DAMAGE COVERED APPROXIMATELY A FOUR SQUARE BLOCK AREA IN THE VICINITY OF THE INTERSECTION OF KENTUCKY AVE AND LINCOLN AVE ON THE EAST SIDE OF EVANSVILLE.

DAMAGE: APPROXIMATELY 25 HOMES DAMAGED. MOST DAMAGE WAS DUE TO TREES BEING BLOWN OVER ONTO ROOFS. 5 HOMES HAD TO BE ABANDONED DUE TO SEVERE ROOF DAMAGE.

DAMAGE TO THE REMAINDER OF THE HOMES WAS MAINLY LIGHT. APPROXIMATELY 30 TREES WERE BLOWN DOWN. ALL DEBRIS...TREES...ETC. WERE BLOWN DIRECTLY TO THE NORTH OF THEIR ORIGINAL LOCATION. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF TWISTING OR TURNING IN EITHER THE DEBRIS FIELD OR THE DOWNED TREES.

DAMAGE ESTIMATES UNDETERMINED AT THIS TIME

INJURIES: NONE

TIME OF DAMAGE: APPROXIMATELY 12:10 PM (CST)

JANUARY 3, 2000

MISC: SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNINGS ISSUED FOR VANDERBURGH COUNTY WERE AS FOLLOWS:

1) ISSUED AT 10:43AM CST...VALID UNTIL 11:30AM CST

2) ISSUED AT 11:46AM CST...VALID UNTIL 12:15PM CST

JAP

Flash flooding was also a major concern with this system. Flash flooding resulted in widespread road closures and bridge washouts in Carlisle County of west Kentucky, where a State of Emergency was declared. Other major flash flooding situations were reported from around Henderson, Kentucky to Paducah and Madisonville, KY. Rainfall amounts averaged from 4 to 8 inches in 24 hours in these areas.