

FLORIDA HAZARDOUS WEATHER BY DAY (to 1994)

MAY

1-5 1978 - Statewide - Exceptionally stormy period with severe weather outbreaks on the 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th of May. See individual days for details.

1 1978 - afternoon-evening - north central Florida - A line of severe thunderstorms moved through northern Florida accompanied by strong gusty winds, lightning, torrential rain, and several reports of hail. Widespread tree damage occurred, many power lines were blown down, and several fires were started by lightning. Many large trees crashed into homes and cars and fell across roads. Tornadoes and severe thunderstorm winds were reported in Alachua, Putnam, Brevard, and Duval Counties. Five persons received minor injuries. Four were injured in a shopping center parking lot in Cocoa (Brevard Co.) when high winds blew down a large tent and damaged cars.

2 1929 - 1620 - Duval Co., Jacksonville Heights and Ortega - Tornado destroyed seven homes and damaged 15 others. A man was killed in a farmhouse.

2 1964 - entire day - North Florida - Madison, Hamilton, Baker, Union, Clay, Columbia, Duval, St. Johns, Putnam and Bradford Counties - Heavy rains from a slow moving low pressure system caused considerable local flooding on most streams and forced evacuation of some residential areas. Maxville and Middleburg communities were hardest hit. Two persons drowned at Maxville while fleeing rising waters. Hail fell in scattered areas and caused some crop damage. Early on the morning of the 3rd thunderstorm winds unroofed two houses and damaged other homes and commercial buildings at Roseland in Indian River County.

3-4 1978 - northern and central Florida - Lines of severe thunderstorms associated with a cold front and strong low pressure system swept through northern and central Florida causing a variety of severe weather, resulting in three deaths and over 100 injuries. Tornadoes, lightning, high winds, hail, heavy rain and local flooding, high tides and beach erosion, funnel clouds and waterspouts were reported. Tides along the Gulf coast were two to 4 feet above normal. A squall line ahead of a fast-moving cold front spawned at least 11 tornadoes and many severe thunderstorms from Jacksonville to Lake Okeechobee as it moved down the peninsula. 4th at 1047 - Pinellas Co. - A tornado hit the High Point Elementary School, killing three students, and injuring 94. Many students were in the cafeteria at the time, otherwise there would have been more fatalities. A pickup truck was hurled 40 feet in the air and came down on a vehicle, five trailers were destroyed, 10 damaged. Other tornadoes caused injuries in Alachua Co. near Gainesville, Osceola Co. near Kenansville, and Highlands Co. near Sebring. Many reports of funnel clouds, waterspouts and strong thunderstorm wind gusts were reported across the peninsula.

3 1994 - afternoon - Statewide - Twenty-six reports of severe weather, including severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, lightning, large hail, funnel clouds and waterspouts from the Panhandle to the Keys. The most significant event occurred in Volusia Co. at Ormond Beach - a Tornado touched down at intersection of I-95 and Highway 40 in northern Volusia Co. It moved east, producing minor damage. The tornado intensified when it passed over the Holiday Village mobile home park just west of Ormond

Beach, where it damaged 125 and destroyed 150 mobile homes. No serious injuries. Damage estimated near \$10 million. The only injuries for the day occurred at St. Lucie in Martin Co., where two firefighters were sent to the hospital after lightning struck the side of their truck while they were fighting a brush fire started by lightning. The largest hail, up to 3", was reported in Palm Beach County.

4 1996 early evening - Northern Manatee and Southern Hillsborough Counties - Ping pong size hail caused significant crop damage. 77 percent of the tomato crop and 90 to 100 percent of the cucumber, bell pepper, and green bean crop were severely damaged or destroyed. Losses were estimated at over 18 million dollars.

5 1956 - 0930 - Escambia Co., Pensacola - Tornado completely leveled a brick garage, and five other buildings were badly damaged. One man was critically injured in a crushed car. 12 cars were destroyed.

5 1978 - 0430 - 0630 - Dade County - A line of severe thunderstorms moved through the area causing extensive tree and power line damage. Several trees fell onto parked cars. This was associated with the same frontal system that moved through northern and central Florida the day before producing many tornadoes, leaving three dead, over 100 injured, and more than \$8,000,000 in damage. The hardest-hit areas in Dade County were Coconut Grove, Coral Gables, Kendall and South Miami. More than 75 power lines were broken by falling tree limbs and flying debris. Wind gusts to 56 mph were recorded at the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables. No injuries reported.

6 1877 - Wakulla Co. - A tornado destroyed homes and trees near St. Marks.

6 1979 - 1530 - Pasco Co. - Lightning killed a 14 year old boy near a wire fence in northern Pasco County.

7 1975 - 1645 - St. Johns Co. - Lightning killed a 63 year old man at the Guana Dam fishing pier.

7 1995 - 1530 - St. Johns Co., Crescent Beach - Two boys, 10 and 14-year olds, drowned in a strong rip current between 75 and 100 feet from shore.

8 1977 - Night - St. Lucie, Indian River, Brevard Cos. - A line of thunderstorms moved through the area from west to east. Several of these thunderstorms were severe, accompanied by lightning, gusty winds, locally heavy rain and some hail. Lightning struck a tire store in Vero Beach causing a fire resulting in \$750,000 damage. Winds up to 50 mph were reported at Kennedy Space Center.

8 1979 - morning-afternoon - Central Florida - Tornado Outbreak/Heavy Rain/Floods - A low pressure system in the eastern Gulf of Mexico spawned waves of tornadic thunderstorms with excessive rainfall. Widespread damage occurred in the Tampa Bay area. The 19 tornadoes reported are the most in one day in Florida history. Three people drowned in Pinellas County where flooding was most severe. Rainfall amounts of 18 inches in 24 hours were reported. Tornadoes damaged homes, mobile homes, businesses, four schools, power lines, and trees. Worst hit was the Polk Co. community of Auburndale where a tornado made a direct hit on the Auburndale School. Only eight students were hurt by flying debris. An 83 year old woman was killed as she hid in an unreinforced concrete block storage shed. Ninety-eight trailers were damaged or destroyed and 40 people were injured. Other, less intense, tornadoes struck

Pasco, Hernando, Volusia, Citrus, St. Lucie, Duval, Desoto and Charlotte Counties. Later, on the evening of the 8th, rain over 5" flooded homes and businesses in eastern Indian River Co.

8 1986 - 1500 - Volusia Co. - Lightning killed a 59-year old man poling a small boat to shore. It was not raining at the time.

9 1987 - 1700 - Broward Co., Ft. Lauderdale - Lightning killed a 23-year old man and a 31 year old man under a tree on the golf course. Two people who did not go under the tree were not injured.

9 1995 - 1730 - Broward Co., Lighthouse Point - A 7-year-old girl was killed when a lightning bolt directly struck her as she played softball in a park. The thunderstorm was about 5 miles northwest of the park when the lightning struck in the midst of 10 children and coaches. The park is surrounded by trees.

10 1977 - evening - Charlotte Co. - Thunderstorm winds gusted to 60 mph and 3.25" of rain fell south of Punta Gorda. No significant damage reported.

10 1961 - afternoon - Alachua Co. - Large hail caused considerable damage to tobacco, corn, and water mellons over a large area west of Gainesville.

11 1977 - afternoon - Broward Co., Miramar - Lightning killed a 16 year boy cutting the lawn in the rain.

11 1995 - 1000 - St. Lucie Co., Ft. Pierce - A 73-year-old man drowned after being pulled about 100 yards offshore in a rip current.

12 1974 - 1300 - Brevard Co., Cocoa Beach - Thunderstorm downburst caused minor damage in Cape Kennedy area. Wind gusts to 52 mph were recorded at Patrick AFB and reported to 75 mph by the public.

13 1975 - 1709 - Broward Co. - Severe thunderstorm winds lasting 20-30 minutes damaged over 90 of the 600 planes based at the Ft. Lauderdale International Airport. The FAA tower measured winds gusting to 101 mph. Tied down aircraft were ripped from their moorings. The roof of the terminal was slightly damaged, hail was reported and two inches of rain fell in an hour.

14 1955 - 1030 - Panama City - Lightning killed one person and injured three others.

14 1974 - evening - Dade Co., Miami - Lightning struck a 13-year-old boy. He died June 28th.

14 1991 - 1330 - Volusia Co., New Smyrna Beach - Lightning killed a man and injured another while they walked on the beach.

15 1950 - 1200 - Orange Co., McCoy Air Force Base - A tornado leveled three concrete block buildings at the base. Other tornadoes and windstorms were reported in the Orlando area causing minor damage.

15 1974 - 1510 - Martin Co., Palm City - A tornado destroyed a boat house and several boats, unroofed some buildings, including local newspaper office. One man suffered a fractured skull from flying debris.

16 1975 - afternoon - Sumter Co., Wildwood - Lightning killed a man and injured another while running for shelter.

16 1983 - early morning - Florida Panhandle - Strong winds and heavy surf - Three people drowned along Panhandle beaches as a cold front with strong winds pushed through the area, bringing rough surf and heavy swells. An 18-year-old student drowned at Panama City Beach; a 53-year-old man drowned at Gulf Islands National Seashore; and a 20-year old man drowned east of Destin. Tallahassee, Leon County - 0930 - A tornado struck a warehouse and hanger area at the Tallahassee Municipal Airport, demolishing one hanger. Six people were temporarily trapped inside the hanger when a live fallen power line blocked their escape. The tornado continued along a west to east path, touching down several more times, damaging some mobile homes, and hurling a bus onto a car. Jefferson and Madison Counties - 1130 - Thunderstorm winds damaged mobile homes, toppled trees and power lines, and blew an automobile 200 feet down the interstate highway. Baker County - 1430 - A tornado demolished several farm buildings about 3 miles south of Sanderson. Light metal roofing was blown over 100 yards.

16 1984 - 1545 - Dade Co., Miami - Lightning killed a man standing next to a tree.

17 1974 - 1800-1900 - Leon Co., Tallahassee - Flash Flood. Thunderstorms dumped four to 5" of rain. Two boys drowned when swept into drainage canal.

18 1963 - Afternoon - Walton Co., DeFuniak Springs - Lightning killed a person.

19 1932 - 1048 - Escambia Co., SW Pensacola - A tornado picked up a farm house and scattered it in pieces across a field killing the owner.

19 1956 - 1900-1930 - West Palm Beach - Tornado-like winds overturned several trailers injuring four people seriously enough to require hospitalization.

19 1978 - 1445-1600 - Hillsborough Co. - A severe thunderstorm moved across Tampa knocking down trees, power lines, damaging 45 homes. A large tree crushed a mobile home. Wind gusts were recorded to 70 mph. No injuries reported.

20 1968 - 1715 - Hendry Co., LaBelle - Lightning killed a fisherman while wading with two others.

21 1961 - afternoon - Brevard Co., Cape Canaveral - Lightning killed a person.

21 1962 - afternoon - Seminole Co., Sanford - Lightning killed a fisherman on the St. Johns River.

22 1984 - 0900 - St. Lucie Co., Fort Pierce - Lightning killed a grove worker.

22 1996 1520 - Collier Co., Naples - A 17-year-old female was drowned in a rip current at Wiggins Pass State Recreational Area. A 32-year-old female companion nearly drowned and was hospitalized in critical condition.

23 1955 - afternoon - Tampa - Lightning killed one person.

23 1962 - Afternoon - Duval Co., Jacksonville - Lightning killed a 13 year old boy fishing from a dock.

23 1963 - Afternoon - Duval Co., Jacksonville - Lightning killed a person.

23 1976 - Morning - central Florida - Subtropical Storm spawned three tornadoes. A tornado in Tampa injured two in mobile homes. Other, weaker tornadoes hit Marion and Volusia Counties.

24 1972 - Afternoon - Clewiston - Lightning killed a 54 year old man while wading on the edge of Lake Okeechobee.

25 1961 - Afternoon - Broward Co., Pompano Beach - Lightning killed a person.

25 1966 - Afternoon - Palm Beach Co., W. Palm Beach - Lightning killed a boy playing in his yard at home.

25-26 1980 - Memorial Day Weekend - Entire State - Severe Weather Outbreak - A large area of thunderstorms developed over the Mississippi Delta during the evening of May 24th, and moved rapidly southeastward toward Florida while growing in size and intensity. Severe weather was experienced in virtually every section of Florida at some time on May 25th, and mostly over southern Florida again on May 26th. Widespread damage occurred with severe thunderstorm winds, hail, lightning, and heavy rain. Nine tornadoes (Manatee, Dade, Alachua, Suwannee, Marion, Hendry, Charlotte, Lee, and Monroe Counties) were reported and funnel clouds were sighted in practically every section of the state. Damage was widespread including airplanes flipped over, boats capsized, widespread power failures with lines down, trees blown over on houses and cars, broken windows, signs, and TV antennas blown down, and fires caused by lightning. Widespread crop damage occurred in the northern counties from hail and high winds. Wind gusts over 50 mph were common in many sections with reports of winds 75 to 80 mph in several areas. One death reported. A woman drowned when she was trapped under an overturned 16 foot boat off Pine Island along the lower southwest coast. The Coast Guard reported that 39 boats capsized along the lower southwest Florida coast alone during the weekend between Gasparilla and Marco Island. A 38-foot shrimp boat sank 15 miles offshore from Hudson, above Clearwater. In view of the widespread severe weather, it is miraculous that only one death and no serious injuries were reported in Florida.

25 1996 1430 - Broward Co., Pembroke Pines - Eleven people were injured by lightning while picnicking at C. B. Smith Park. The lightning struck a tree then jumped to a picnic table and shocked eleven of twenty-three people nearby. One person was seriously injured and hospitalized after the lightning burned a gold chain into his neck. It was not raining at the time.

26 1951 - 1030 - Franklin Co., Carrabelle - Waterspout/Tornado damaged boats, buildings, fishing equipment and caused roof damage to 20 homes. Three fishermen were drowned when their boat was overturned.

26 1973 - 1300 - 1445 - Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton Cos. - Several tornadoes touched down. Worst hit was Crestview where one man was killed and four injured in mobile homes. Another tornado struck just east of Gulf Breeze injuring seven in mobile homes.

26 1977 - 1435 - Hendry Co. - Lightning killed a 19 year old who was herding cattle on a ranch near State Road 836.

26 1982 - 0151 - St. Johns Co. - Lightning killed a man and injured one near Molasses Junction.

27 1968 - 1820 - Leon Co. - Golf ball size hail reported north of Tallahassee.

28 1989 - 1500 - Marion Co., Ocala - Lightning killed a young woman and injured her mother at the edge of a lake in a wooded area.

28 1996 1500 - Dade Co., Miami - A 17-year-old female was hospitalized after being struck indirectly by lightning as she walked down the street. It was not raining at the time.

29 1963 - Afternoon - DeSoto Co., Arcadia - Lightning killed a person.

29 1994 - 1500 - Suwanee Co., Live Oak - Lightning directly struck and killed a man at Little River Springs.

29 1996 1140 - Hillsborough Co., Tampa - Downburst winds from a thunderstorm picked up a small boat and airlifted it to the opposite side of a canal where it landed in a resident's yard and damaged a parked vehicle.

30 1962 - Afternoon - Pasco Co., New Port Richey - Lightning killed a person on the beach.

30 1963 - Afternoon - St. Lucie Co., Fort Pierce - Lightning killed a person.

30 1994 - 1640 - Nassau Co., American Beach - Strong onshore winds produced Rip Currents that drowned five persons during a festival on Amelia Island. Eight other persons were hospitalized after near drownings in rip currents at American and Main Beaches.

30 1996 1930 - Indian River Co., Sebastian - A 20 passenger airplane at the Sebastian Airport was overturned and destroyed by thunderstorm winds.

31 1973 - 2140 - Desoto Co. - A small tornado touched down east of Arcadia blowing a trailer on top of a car with people in both - injuring three. A nearby house was destroyed.

31 1991 - morning to afternoon - central Florida - Severe Thunderstorms struck eight counties. Hail from nickle up to golfball size was reported in Pinellas, Putnam, Citrus, Marion, and Brevard Counties. The largest hail was in Putnam Co. where it broke windows and tree limbs. Severe thunderstorm winds were reported in Sumter, Citrus, Marion, Levy, Alachua and Putnam Counties. Winds destroyed a carport and blew down trees and power lines in Sumter Co. and many trees and power lines were blown down in the other counties. A firefighter was injured by lightning at Largo in Pinellas County.