

# Storm Rocks City at 4:57 P.M. Wednesday

By MIKE MAHONEY  
REGISTER MANAGING EDITOR

Four residents were counted dead Thursday morning following the worst disaster ever to hit the city of Oelwein and the nearby community of Maynard. A tornado ripped through Oelwein at 4:47 p.m. Wednesday with estimates of damage running from a conservative \$10 million to as high as \$30 million.

Listed as dead by officials were:  
Mrs. Grace Damon, in her fifties, of Oelwein  
Mrs. Louis Ponsar, Maynard  
Glenda Kelly, Maynard, 3 years old  
Albert Heaton, 89, Oelwein (died of a heart attack)

Hundreds of area and local repair crews, emergency utility crews, and an uncountable number of area residents were on hand Thursday morning to assist in the cleanup campaign.

Over 200 members of the Iowa National Guard were on duty along with 47 members of the Iowa Highway Patrol, Oelwein City Police, numerous surrounding police and volunteer firemen (too many to even begin to estimate).

A report from utility crews indicated reconstruction of the damage began immediately. Iowa Electric Light & Power Co. (Gas Company) estimated 50 men working on damage with only three problem areas in the core city. Gas officials report service was only disconnected at the areas where buildings were completely destroyed.

Northwestern Bell Telephone Manager Robert O. Link stated at least 75 out-of-town servicemen have been rushed into the city to begin repair. Link estimated as high as 75 per cent of the city phones were out of city with only emergency calls being handled in long distance service. Link, like all utility officials, was unable to estimate the damage in dollars and was also unable to estimate when service would be restored.

Interstate Power Co. reported 100 work crews from all sections of the state have been rushed to the city. No one was able to estimate the exact damage, but power lines were down throughout the city.

Red Cross Emergency Units were rushed into the city with stations set up in the basement of the Sacred Heart church and Presbyterian church. Cots, blankets, clothes and other emergency rations have been trucked into the city to handle all situations.

City officials were urging residents to preserve their water supply. There was no immediate danger problem with water, but crews were working on pumps to handle normal water flow.

Mercy Hospital was flooded with injured immediately following the disaster. The serious and critical were transferred to Waterloo and Independence hospitals.

The injured list, certain to reach several hundred, will never be completed. Officials at Mercy reported 58 treated and released, 16 admitted, Hospitals at Independence, Sumner, and Waterloo reported 20 admitted for treatment.

**HUGHES VISITS AREA**  
Gov. Harold Hughes and Adj. Gen. Junior Miller toured the city with Mayor Samuel Mazzotti and Capt. Les Ohl of the Oelwein National Guard Thursday morning. (Ohl's wife was one of the injured.) Hughes offered the city any available state equipment and personnel such as trucks of the highway commission, chain saws, etc. He also complimented the Mayor and Clerk Tom Peterson, saying, "It looks as if you have everything organized real well."

The Governor was particularly interested in what advance warning the town had and was informed by the Mayor that a broadcast warning went off (the siren sounded) briefly before the electrical power was disrupted.

The Mayor estimated damage at a conservative \$14 million. He reported three dead and three on the critical list.

The Governor declared the city a disaster area in order to provide governmental help, however he said "it won't be enough."

"This job requires a total community effort. Everyone has to rebuild and review. I'm sure the Federal Housing Administration and Small Business Administration will offer help. I have confidence in Oelwein's courage to recover with all help available. The Governor also reported he would fly over the Maynard area to investigate damage there."

"Small communities sometimes are hurt more by these disasters because they don't have the comparative resources to recover."

## 2,000 TREES

The damage in the city was estimated to include at least 2,000 trees, an undetermined amount of houses completely destroyed and an estimate of at least 50-75% of all housing of the city had damage varying from minor to total.

Listed below is the group of business establishments that have been either completely destroyed or suffered near-total losses. They were made in personal observations in a car-tour this morning.

They included: Woods Novelty, Colonial Baking warehouse, Bruster's DX, Oelwein Chemical Company, Oelwein Tool and Die, Oelwein Speciality, Sacred Heart church, Oelwein Body and Truck, Hertz Truck Rental, McAlean's Laundromat, Chandler Company, Sanitary Dairy, Dairy Queen, Luig's, Rueber's Auto and Farm Equipment Specialities.

Terry's Gulf, Sun Mart, Oelwein Bottling Works, Whittig's Flowers, Farm Fleet, Acme Trucking, Kinsman Greenhouse, Warthan Motors, Pine Lodge, Oelwein Veterinary Clinic, Valley Mobile Homes, Hub City Implement, Oelwein Furniture, Apco Station, Northwest Distributing, Oelwein Elevator, Rogge's Machine Shop, Grand Hotel, Lambert Chevrolet, Oelwein Implement, Wiley Davis Insurance and Oelwein Glass and Paint.



ONE OF OELWEIN'S business establishments leveled in the storm was Barney's Texaco at the north edge of the city. Fred's Super Valu, Sperry's Garage, and the Book & Art were also heavily damaged in the immediate area.

Dunlap Press, Knief's, Meyer and Lincoln Hardware, Earl Moore Garage, Oelwein Supply, Zacharias DX, Eldon's Shell, Kuhn's Blacksmith, Cottage Studio, Cross Printerie, First Presbyterian church, First Baptist church, St. Mary's Episcopal (completely destroyed), Barney's Texaco, Fred's Super Valu, Sperry's Garage, Book and Art Shop, United States Post Office, and City Laundering Company.

There was hardly a business place or home in the Oelwein area that did not receive damage. The Oelwein City hall was practically destroyed along with many other city buildings.

Because of quick assistance from the telephone company, the Register was able to use two phone lines.

Members of the news and advertising staff called all hospitals involved and made a list of the injured. The list includes only those at hospitals, and does not include the many who suffered injuries, but who did not go to the hospital.

Treated At Mercy Hospital  
Bencke, Elizabeth  
Bilyeu, Mrs. Lois  
Bilyeu, Daniel  
Benjamin, Sister Mary  
Cue, Susan  
Dixon, Mrs. Charles  
Duncan, Mrs. Madeline  
Eikenberry, John  
Eikenberry, Mary  
Fitzpatrick, Mrs. Mary Jane  
Gates, Jennifer  
Gould, Albert  
Hallock, Pat  
Houser, Jessie

Houser, Robert  
Hutter, Paul  
Hutter, Steven  
Ingels, Jean  
Johnson, Earl  
Kamper, Jane  
Kamper, Nancy  
Kaufman, Essie  
Kelly, Gordon  
Keegan, Ronald R.  
Kringlen, Steve  
Krafton, ?  
LeRoy Latham  
Leehey, Andrea  
Liberl, Mrs. Robert  
Lowe, Mrs. Ben  
McGregor, Benita  
McNamara, Genevieve  
Michael, N. J.  
Miller, Joseph A.  
Morgan, Mrs. Charles  
Moyle, Marion  
Mundt, Jerry  
Muchmore, Dick  
Murray, Bill  
Nielsen, Jens  
Ohlgschlager, Mary  
Osterman, Mrs. Lucy  
Phillips, Russel  
Phillips, Mrs. John  
Phillips, Beverly  
Pond, Ceila  
Ricchio, Alex  
Shea, Sharon  
Sexton, Hannah  
Schlegel, Aaron  
Smith, Dave  
Streitmatter, Dale  
Streppe, Darwin  
Teufel, John  
Trotter, Myrna  
Wardell, Tom  
Wise, Leona  
Wolfe, Emilia  
Admitted at Oelwein Mercy Hospital:

Mrs. Kathryn Beaman, good  
Emily Carlson, fairly good  
Mrs. Dorothy Flaucher, good  
Connie Francis  
Jason Francis  
Mrs. James Ingels, fair  
Fred Ingels, fairly good  
Mrs. Hazel Jones, good  
Mrs. N. J. Michael, fairly good  
Mrs. Leslie Ohl  
Ben Proctor  
Frank Schepple, fairly good  
Julie Trotter, fairly good  
Mrs. Marjorie Trotter, fairly good  
Mrs. Viola Zacharias, fairly good  
Mrs. Hattie Zander, fairly good  
Admitted at Allen Memorial Hospital, Waterloo:  
Mrs. Lloyd Major, 26 fair condition  
Dawn Major, 6, fair  
Mrs. Anna Steege, Maynard, 77, fair  
Mrs. Gordon (Geraldine) Kelly, Maynard, 28, serious, in intensive care unit  
Dale Streitmatter, 41, satisfactory  
David Schlader, 33, Marble Rock,

serious, in intensive care  
Julie McKoon also reportedly hospitalized

Treated and released:  
Gordon Kelly  
Mrs. Diann Libert, 25  
At Sumner Hospital:  
Galen Kelly 5 1/2, fair, Maynard  
Cary Kelly, 3, fair, Maynard  
Gerald Kelly, 1 1/2, fair, Maynard

Julius Wegner, Fayette, 57, fair  
At St. Francis Hospital, Waterloo:  
Mrs. William (Nina) Hicks, 54, good condition  
At Schoitz Memorial Hospital, Waterloo:  
Mrs. Winifred Joyce, 811 1st Ave. N.E., 71, left arm injury, condition good  
At People's Memorial Hospital, Independence:  
Florence Paulsen, 49, Oelwein, good

Lucille Taylor, 67, Maynard, fair  
Russell Phillips, 10, Oelwein, fair  
Mrs. John (Aline) Phillips, 40, Oelwein, fair  
Henry Warneke, 82, Maynard, fair  
Oma Nefzger, 58, Oelwein, fair  
LaVern Warthan, 66, Oelwein, fair  
Members of the Iowa Highway Patrol and National Guard were turning back sight-seers at road blocks on all four sides of the city. Passes were handed out to officials to get in and out of the community.

The tornado that first hit the area along highway 150 south of the present city limits, swirled to the north and blanketed the entire community with damage. Businesses were flattened and cars tossed about like snow balls.

Heavy damage was reported to Senior High, Junior High, and Central grade school. Supt. Arthur Senor called school off until further notice.

Pick up began immediately. A center of communication was established in the basement of the telephone office, working in coordination with officials at city hall. Members of the national guard, highway patrol, city police, and other emergency units coordinated the work.

Construction materials and heavy machinery from Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Independence, Cedar Falls, Volga, Strawberry Point, Oran, Fairbank were rushed in. A large amount of students from the University of Northern Iowa and Upper Iowa pitched in to help with numerous work activities. A few gas stations were able to pump gas with auxiliary pumps.

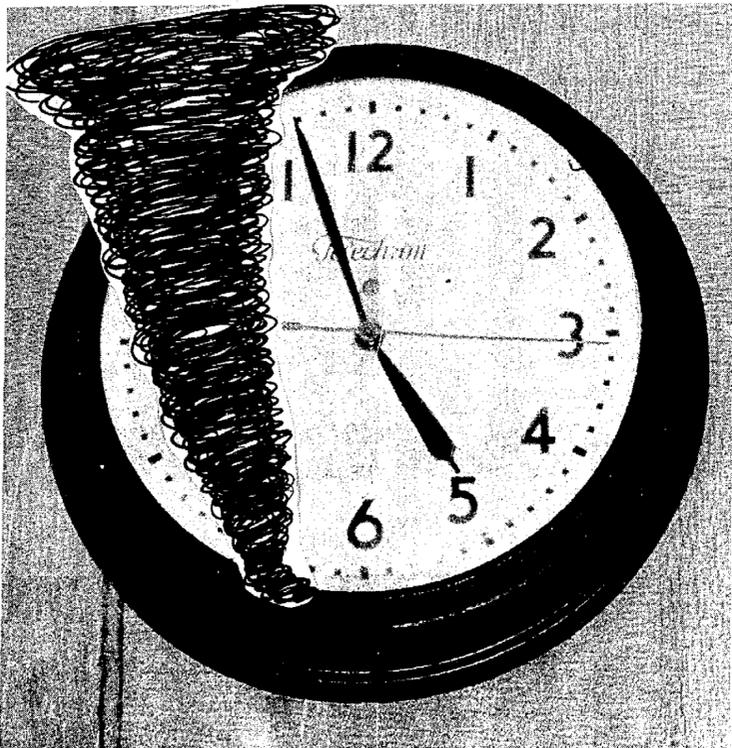
Today's issue of the REGISTER was published with the cooperation of the Independence Bulletin-Journal. The Oelwein Register press and equipment was stymied without electrical service.

Oelwein Mercy Hospital personnel expressed appreciation to those who went to the hospital to help care for the injured. Doctors and nurses, aides, Red Cross workers reported in great numbers.

This morning, people from all over were volunteering to help in any capacity. Drug salesman, dressings salesman, many other salesmen, "stopped to offer aid. Manchester Welfare service was there to offer assistance. Some people went to the hospital for necessary drugs.

Sister Mary Maureen, administrator, said "We're so grateful to so many people. Our sincerest thanks and God Bless you all."

Clean up crews were needed at the hospital to help clear the broken glass, downed tree limbs, etc.



**WHERE WERE YOU?** The tornado winds hit the downtown Oelwein area at 4:57 p. m. Wednesday. The results of the

storm will have side effects on each and every resident of the community during the next weeks.

City officials warned residents to be aware of unauthorized personnel in the city, working to "make a fast buck." CHECK before you agree.

**PHOTOGRAPHS** for this issue were taken by Earl Davis, Jim Leuck, and Lynn Arnold of the Register staff.