



# Iowa Tornado Statistics



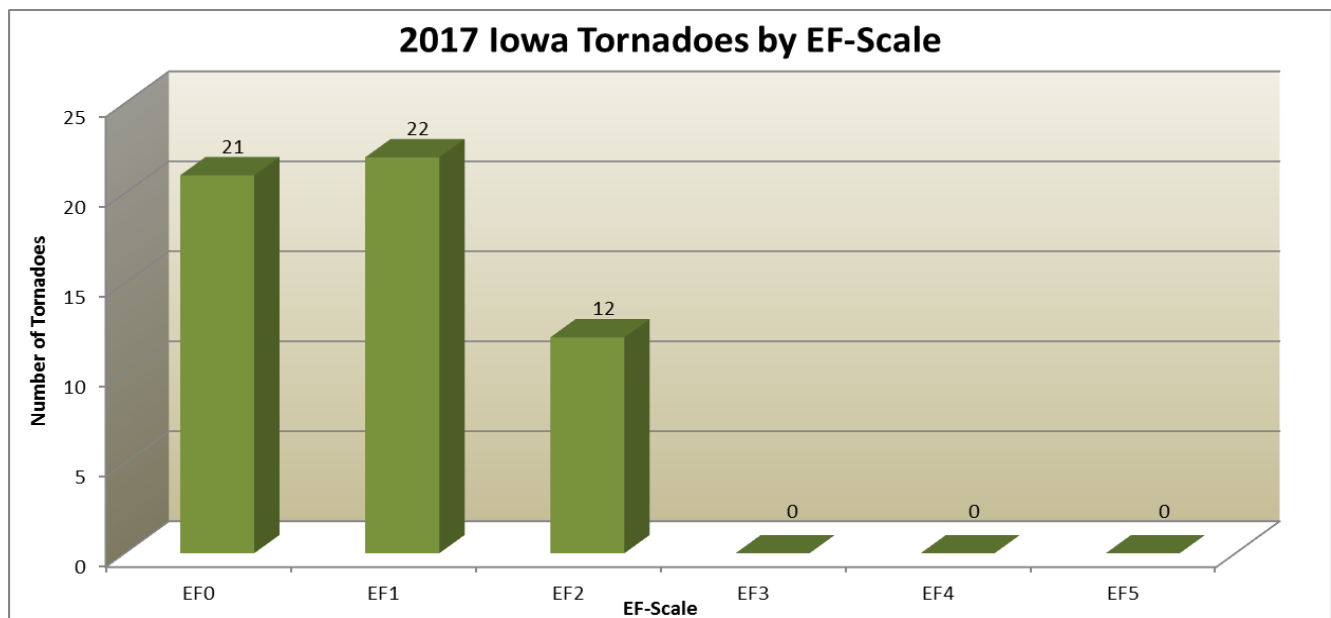
## 2017

Compiled by: Craig Cogil

Total Number of Tornadoes: 55  
Number of Injuries: 6  
Number of Deaths: 0  
Path Length of All Tornadoes: 323.2 miles  
Average Path Length: 5.88 miles  
Average Width: 120 yards  
Longest Path Length Individual Tornado: 34.7 miles  
Largest Width Individual Tornado: 1000 yards (0.57 miles wide)  
Peak Hour of Tornado Occurrence: 5 - 6 PM CST  
Peak Month of Tornado Occurrence: March  
Most Tornadoes in a Day: March 6<sup>th</sup> with 18 tornadoes  
Number of Tornado Days: 15

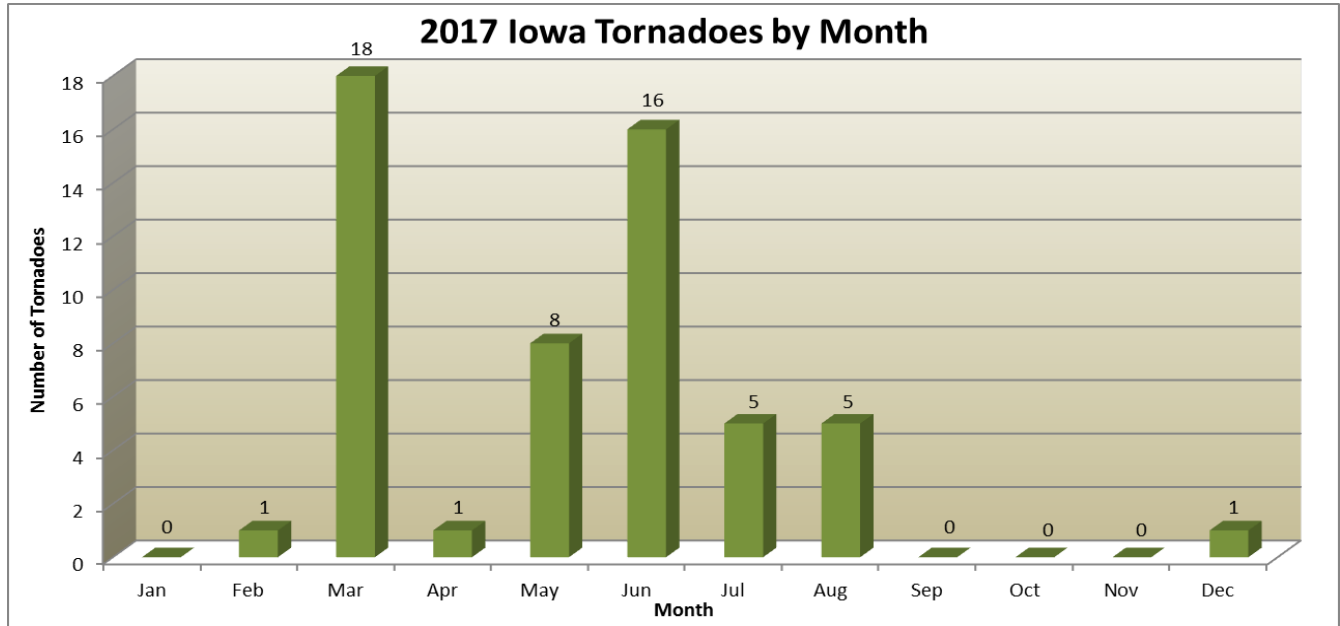
Tornadoes by EF-Scale:

EF0	EF1	EF2	EF3	EF4	EF5
21	22	12	0	0	0
38.2%	40.0%	21.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



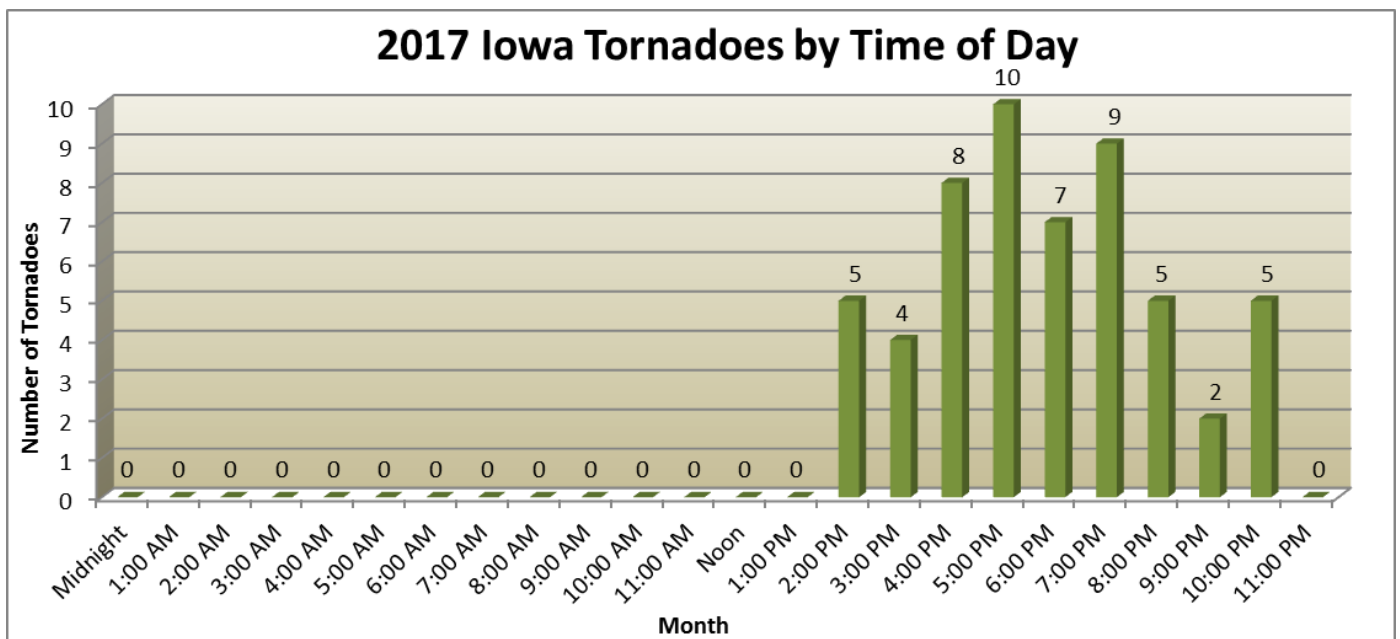
## Tornadoes by Month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	1	18	1	8	16	5	5	0	0	0	1
0%	1.8%	32.7%	1.8%	14.6%	29.1%	9.1%	9.1%	0%	0%	0%	1.8%



## Tornadoes by Time of Day (CST):

MID	1AM	2AM	3AM	4AM	5AM	6AM	7AM	8AM	9AM	10AM	11AM
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Noon	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM	11PM
0	0	5	4	8	10	7	9	5	2	5	0
0%	0%	9.1%	7.3%	14.5%	18.2%	12.7%	16.4%	9.1%	3.6%	9.1%	0%



# 2017 Iowa Tornado Summary

By: Craig Cogil

Iowa saw an above normal year of tornado activity for 2017 with 55 tornadoes statewide along with several unique occurrences. Of note, the first tornado of the year occurred on February 28<sup>th</sup> near Follets in far southern Clinton County. This was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> February tornado on record since 1950 and the first since the only other February tornado occurred near Mason City in 1977. The 1977 February tornado is noted as being somewhat questionable given that the meteorological conditions were not supportive of tornadoes around the Mason City area. Another unusual occurrence for 2017 was the fact that EF1 tornadoes outnumbered EF0 tornadoes for the first time since 1983. While it was common to have EF1 outpace EF0 numbers in the tornado database prior to 1980, EF0 tornadoes have greatly outnumbered EF1's in most years since 1980 given the better reporting capabilities. It has been noted that the gap between EF0's and EF1's has narrowed in recent years and it is speculated that this may be due to the use of the Enhanced Fujita scale and associated damage indicators versus the original Fujita rating methods. Finally, a rare December tornado occurred in Lee County on the 4<sup>th</sup> as an EF2 tornado that began in northeast Missouri tracked across the Des Moines River into Iowa west of Keokuk before lifting.

Overall, the season began very quickly with the largest event of the year occurring on March 6<sup>th</sup> with 18 tornadoes. Most of the tornadoes with this event were from southern into east central Iowa with five of the tornadoes with path lengths in excess of 10 miles. In fact, the longest track of the year occurred on this day with a 35 mile long path across Scott and Clinton Counties. The 18 tornadoes on this day are the most for any day in March since 1950 and in fact ties for 8<sup>th</sup> for the most tornadoes on any given day for the period of record. The 18 tornadoes for the month of March were also the most tornadoes for any March breaking the old record of 17 tornadoes in March 1990. Three injuries were also observed on this day with an EF2 tornado that moved through portions of Muscatine. It was relatively quiet from this early March event until the middle of May with only one tornado occurring in April. From May 10<sup>th</sup> to May 17<sup>th</sup>, eight tornadoes occurred at various locations across the state although with relatively minor impact.

The next event was on June 16<sup>th</sup> when a large complex of thunderstorms moved from Nebraska into southwest Iowa. Two tornadoes developed in southern portions of the Omaha metro area before crossing the Missouri River into Iowa. Another tornado occurred on this day in Taylor county producing minor damage to a farmstead. June 28<sup>th</sup> was the other big day in June for tornadoes with 13 tornadoes across portions of central into eastern Iowa. An EF2 tornado occurred in Fremont County to start the activity on this day followed quickly by a visually striking tornado that moved across northern Adair County during the middle of the afternoon. Several other tornadoes occurred during the day with two more EF2's in eastern Iowa, one of which hit Prairieburg, producing one injury.

July and August saw six different days of tornado activity with 5 tornadoes occurring in each month. The most notable event was a tornado that did extensive damage in McGregor producing two injuries on July 19<sup>th</sup>. The final tornado of the year was the December tornado mentioned above.

If you have any questions, please contact Craig Cogil at [craig.cogil@noaa.gov](mailto:craig.cogil@noaa.gov)