

# Iowa Tornado Statistics



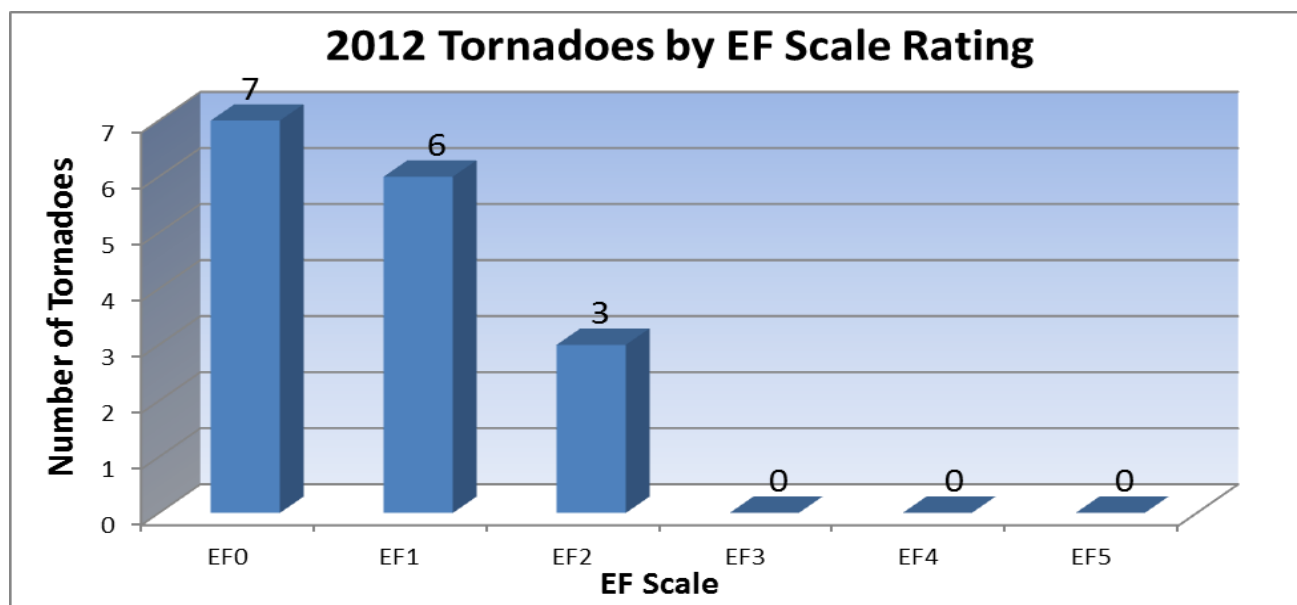
## 2012

Compiled by: Craig Cogil

Total Number of Tornadoes: 16  
Number of Injuries: 6  
Number of Deaths: 0  
Path Length of All Tornadoes: 52.2 miles  
Average Path Length: 3.3 miles  
Average Width: 200 Yards  
Longest Path Length Individual Tornado: 16.6 miles  
Largest Width Individual Tornado: 880 Yards (0.5 miles wide)  
Peak Hour of Tornado Occurrence: 2PM - 4PM CST and 8PM – 9PM CST  
Peak Month of Tornado Occurrence: April  
Most Tornadoes in a Day: April 14<sup>th</sup> with 7  
Number of Tornado Days: 6

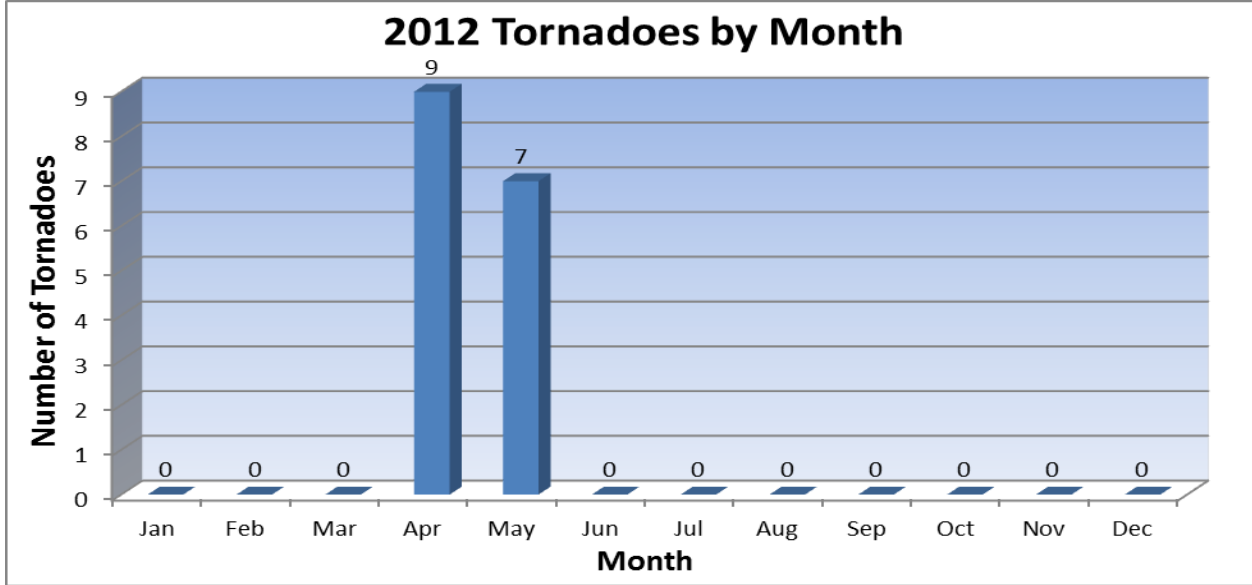
Tornadoes by EF-Scale:

EF0	EF1	EF2	EF3	EF4	EF5
7	6	3	0	0	0
43.75%	37.5%	18.75%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



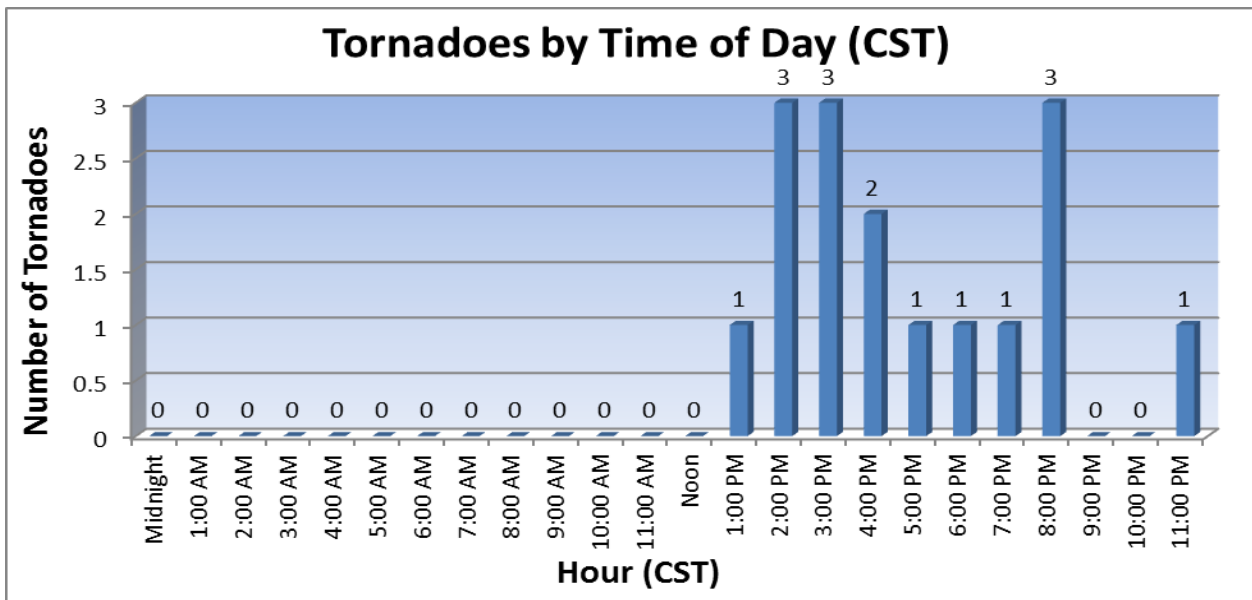
Tornadoes by Month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	9	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	56.2%	43.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



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%	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	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	3	0	0	1
0.0%	6.25%	18.75%	18.75%	12.5%	6.25%	6.25%	6.25%	18.75%	0.0%	0.0%	6.25%



# 2012 Iowa Tornado Summary

The 2012 tornado season was extraordinarily brief but not without a couple of significant events. The season started on April 14<sup>th</sup> with seven tornadoes primarily in southern Iowa and was the most tornadoes on any given day of 2012. Two tornadoes on this day were rated EF2 and hit two different communities in southwest Iowa.

The first of these was a tornado that touched down near Percival, Iowa and began a 12 mile long track that went through Thurman, causing extensive home, vehicle, and tree damage to the town. It was estimated that at least 70 percent of the buildings in Thurman sustained damage, including 14 homes that were destroyed. Only minor injuries were reported in Thurman; however, as the tornado crossed Interstate 29, four semi-trucks were overturned and four truckers required hospitalization.

The second EF2 developed over extreme eastern Adams County and damaged a farmstead shortly after forming. This tornado continued into Union county just southwest of Cromwell and was apparently rain-wrapped with no visual confirmation of the tornado along its 16 mile path. This tornado tracked east-northeast for much of its life and passed through the northwest portion of Creston. The Greater Regional Medical Center and Southwest Community College sustained EF2 damage with the worst damage occurring to the Green Hills Education Center. The tornado continued to the northeast beyond Creston, damaging a few farmsteads before lifting.

One other community was affected by a tornado on April 14<sup>th</sup>. An EF1 tornado occurred in the “comma-head” of a bow echo starting 1 mile west of Hedrick in Keokuk County, then passed through the town before ending just west of Martinsburg. The tornado downed power lines along with destroying a shed and grain bins along its three mile path. In Hedrick, approximately 10 homes were damaged as well as some of the structures at the ball park. A deputy police car was turned around and fell into a ditch.

April saw two additional tornadoes on the 21<sup>st</sup> in Clay County. The next tornado occurrence was also in Clay County on May 1<sup>st</sup> when an EF0 tornado occurred during the evening hours. May 3<sup>rd</sup> saw one tornado in southeast Iowa when an EF2 moved across portions of Henry and Washington Counties. This tornado was on the ground for almost 7 miles and destroyed several farm buildings, snapped several trees, downed power lines, and produced significant roof damage to homes. Four more weak tornadoes occurred on May 4<sup>th</sup> in northwest and north central Iowa with the final tornado of the year occurring on May 24<sup>th</sup> in Fayette County.

The total tornado count for 2012 was 16, which is well below the long term average of 47 for Iowa. This was an extraordinary low amount and the lowest since reliable records started in 1980. There are records for tornadoes in Iowa dating back to 1950; however, the reliability of these records are questionable given the poorer reporting standards of the time. If stats back to 1950 are included, this is the lowest total of tornadoes since 15 were reported in 1963.

The last report of a tornado on May 24<sup>th</sup> is also the earliest ending of the tornado season on record since 1980. The previous earliest cessation was July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 so this year trimmed nearly six weeks off the previous record. Tornadoes only occurred in two months during 2012, which has not happened since reliable records started in 1980 and only occurred once before in 1955, when reporting standards were much more suspect. This tornado year will certainly go down as extraordinary in its brevity, low number of tornadoes, and the very early ending to the season.

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