

June 2nd, 2024 Lower Trans Pecos Severe Weather

Severe weather impacted portions of Pecos and Terrell Counties during the afternoon and evening of Sunday, June 2nd, 2024. A dryline extending across the western Permian Basin into the Davis Mountains aided in the initial development of several severe thunderstorms near I-10 to the west of Fort Stockton that afternoon. These thunderstorms rapidly intensified as they moved east, producing hail up to softball size and impacting the southern half of Fort Stockton. This thunderstorm activity continued to move southeast, between US Highway 385 and US Highway 285, reaching Terrell County by early evening. Shortly after, one storm produced two tornadoes that eventually moved through portions of Sanderson, TX.



Tornado entering the town of Sanderson. Photo Courtesy of Jubal Lane.

Sanderson Tornado #1

Tornado warnings had already been issued for one thunderstorm moving into rural Terrell County north of Highway 90. Another thunderstorm would develop to the south of this tornado-warned thunderstorm, merging with it, and aiding its intensification as it approached the town of Sanderson. A new tornado warning was issued ahead of this supercell thunderstorm as it entered the town. A tornado was photographed crossing a ridge to the west of town. This tornado would quickly enter a neighborhood to the west of US Highway 285. This was the hardest hit area with significant damage. A manufactured home was destroyed and a steel carport collapsed in on itself. Ground scouring and debarked vegetation was also observed in this area. The worst of this damage resulted in a rating of EF-3 with wind speeds up to 140 MPH. Unfortunately, 12 people were injured in this area but thankfully there were no fatalities. The tornado would continue tracking to the east, snapping power poles, and moving empty shipping containers before lifting near the intersection of US Highway 90 and US Highway 285.

Sanderson Tornado #2

A short time later, a second tornado touched down along Oak Street in Sanderson. This smaller and weaker tornado would go on to damage power poles and buildings along the road as it tracked east. Unfortunately, a small wooden structure would be destroyed. This damage resulted in an EF-1 rating with wind speeds of up to 110 MPH. The tornado would dissipate a short time later.

Thank you to the local and regional emergency management agencies for their help in conducting this damage survey.