Serving Residents of Northeast Kansas Since 1878

The Topeka Tiller

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1 SPRING 2012

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TOPEKA, KANSAS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Record Warm March Leads to Active April

By Kyle Poage, Jared Leighton, and Jenifer Bowen

March began with unprecedented heat across Northeast Kansas. Temperatures during the month of March 2012 averaged to be much above normal for our office's area of coverage. In particular, for Topeka and Concordia, where weather records date back to 1887 and 1885, respectively, this March was the warmest ever recorded, with temperatures averaging to be about 14 degrees above normal (See Figure 1). The average temperature for the month was in the upper 50's, which is close to levels that are common in late April. Records for individual days were broken on several occasions, particularly in the March 14 to March 20 period. On March 18, the lowest temperatures measured at Topeka and Concordia were 69 degrees and 62 degrees, respectively. This was the warmest low temperature in March for Topeka, and tied for the warmest low in March at Concordia.

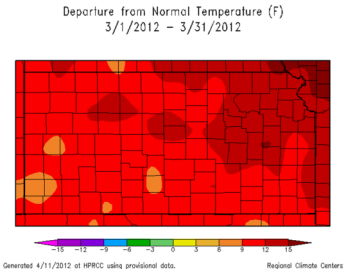


Figure 1. Departures from normal temperatures for March

The very warm month was not limited to just central and eastern Kansas; much above normal levels were found across the state. In fact, most states east of the Rocky Mountains experienced the warmest March on record, but on a global scale, temperatures were actually the coolest since 1999. See Figures 2 and 3 below to see how the United States compared to the world in terms of temperature anomalies.

After the record warm March, April also made its mark in the record books with a high of 97 degrees set on April 25, 2012, This temperature not only broke the previous daily record, but also tied it for the highest temperature ever recorded in the month of April. In addition to the record heat, the weather pattern was also active with a few rounds of severe thunderstorms over portions of Northeast Kansas.

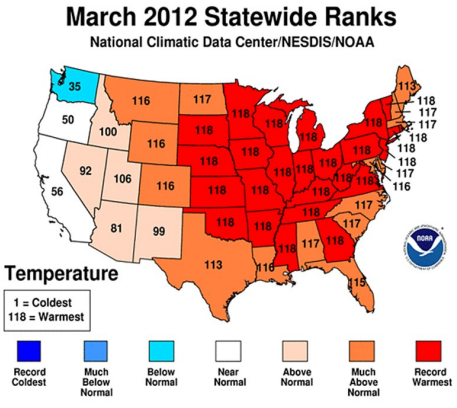


Figure 2. Statewide Ranks of the United States for temperature in March 2012. Only three states (California, Oregon, Washington) ranked at or below normal.

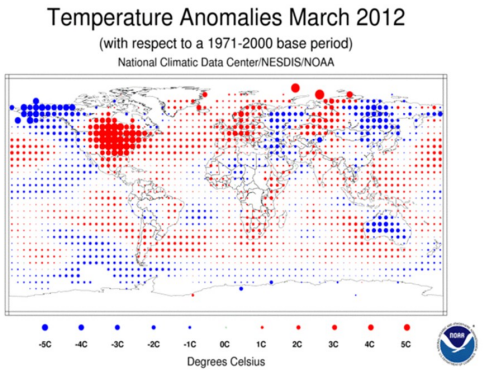


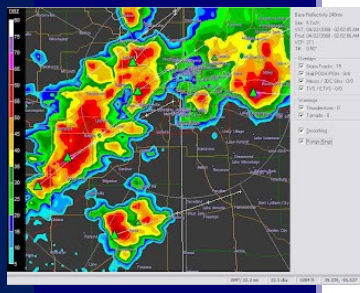
Figure 3. Temperature anomalies for March 2012 for the World compared to the 1971-2000 time period. Note the United States was the warmest on record with surrounding continents at or below normal.

Active April continues Page 3

To Warn or Not to Warn

A Glimpse Inside National Weather Service Severe Weather Operations

By Brian Barjenbruch, Senior Forecaster



"*We have interrupted the regularly scheduled program to inform you that the National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning for…*" The odds are good that you will hear this phrase come across a northeast Kansas television or radio broadcast at some point during 2012. Perhaps you already have. These interruptions can affect millions of people and have enormous economic impacts as well, and the decision to issue a tornado or severe thunderstorm warning is not one that is taken lightly. National Weather Service meteorologists place an ultimate emphasis on using years of scientific training and knowledge to issue the most accurate severe weather warnings possible. Well before any warning is issued, meteorologists spend 4 to 8 years obtaining undergraduate and graduate degrees, and continue to intently study the latest in weather research and forecasting techniques long after university coursework has come to an end. This is all done in the name of providing more accurate forecasts and warnings for the people they serve. After all of the studying and training in preparation, there are still the individual decisions to make. Basically stated, "Is this storm severe?" To provide an inside look to this process, consider that at any given hour on a typical clear-weather day, 2 to 3 meteorologists will be working at an NWS office to provide the various daily forecasts and services. However, when severe weather threatens the service area, there may be as many as 10 meteorologists present at any given time, and all of them extremely busy with very specific tasks and a goal of providing

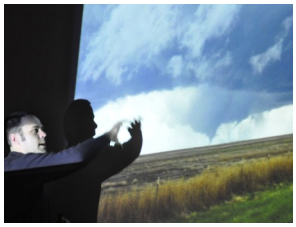
***To Warn* continues Page 4**

2012 Spotter Training

By Chad Omitt, Warning Coordination Meteorologist

Every year, the National Weather Service in Topeka presents spotter talks which are open to the general public. Presentations are typically 1-1.5 hours long, and are given by a meteorologist from our office. Figure 1 to the right shows Meteorologist Jared Leighton explaining the phenomena known as a rear flank downdraft (RFD) and what the RFD can look like in the field as a clear slot or bright area located to the left of a wall cloud or developing tornado.

Figure 1



Spotter training this past year focused on storm structure and accurate identification of important cloud features associated with supercell thunderstorms. Figure 2 on page 6 shows some of the more important features associated with a classic supercell as seen from the east looking west.

***Spotter Training* continues Page 6**

National Weather Service booth at West Ridge Mall in Topeka.

NWS Severe Weather Awareness Day

By Jenifer Bowen, Meteorologist Intern

The second annual Severe Weather Awareness Day was held on March 17th, 2012 at West Ridge Mall in Topeka, Kansas. The goal was to educate the dangers of severe weather phenomena along with steps and methods to take to protect yourself and your family. A handful of participants ranged from Shawnee County Emergency Management to the Red Cross and local home reconstruction companies. We also had the privilege of welcoming Farmers Insurance who brought the Farmers Catastrophe Bus, a mobile vehicle that provides assistance to individuals affected by natural disasters, spanning from Hurricane Katrina in 2006 to the Joplin, Missouri tornado in 2011. While local tours of the bus were given outside the mall entrance, weather safety talks and interactive activities were being performed by Topeka NWS Meteorologists inside. Kids and adults alike enjoyed the flood and tornado simulator, thunder-makers, and rain gauges. Overall it was a successful event and we thank all the participants who came out to help.

Active April *Continued...*

The first event of the year occurred on March 28, 2012 when northeast Kansas was impacted by large hail and a weak tornado. One particular thunderstorm in Osage County received an overwhelming number of golfball to hen-sized egg hail reports. Figure 1 below shows hail larger than 2 inches in Osage County (photo courtesy of Scott Currens). One report of baseball sized hail was observed that evening near Carbondale

Figure 1.

in Osage County. A brief tornado also impacted rural areas of Lyon County that evening 4 miles northeast of Americus.

Luckily, no injuries or damage was reported.

The next and most damaging event thus far occurred on April 14th, the day of the Central Plains severe weather outbreak. On the afternoon and evening of April 14th, strong thunderstorms brought several rounds of severe weather which included many strong, long-tracked tornadoes. Figure 2 below is an image of a tornado that occurred across portions of Saline and Ottawa County. The event was unusual in that the severity and strength of the wind fields feeding the storms was uncommonly strong for the Central Plains. One of the


Figure 2.

strongest tornadoes formed around 6:30 pm in central Kansas and moved northeastward into Rice County where it produced a very strong quarter to a half mile wide tornado. The parent storm of this tornado then moved into Ottawa and Dickinson Counties, where it continued to produce tornadoes, until the storm finally weakened in eastern Clay County. Reports from Ottawa and Dickinson Counties indicate that a few farmsteads near Niles and Manchester sustained damage by the tornado, as well as a gas transfer station along K-18 near Talmage. Additional brief tornadoes were spotted near Burdick in Morris county, and near Olpe in Lyon county.

Numerous other storms affected the area on Saturday afternoon. An initial batch of storms formed north of Wichita around 2:00 pm, and moved northeastward into north central and northeastern Kansas. These storms were only marginally severe as the largest

Active April **continues Page 6**

April 14, 2012 Kansas Tornado Outbreak

By Scott Blair, Forecaster

A few meteorologists that work for the National Weather Service hit the road and storm chase while off-duty or during their vacation time. These opportunities provide priceless field experiences to correlate what is actually happening in the physical world with remote sensed observations, such as radar and surface observations. Real-time severe weather reports are also obtained from these storm chasers, which greatly assist in the warning decision process. These self-motivated training opportunities can later provide improved warning performance in the office and spawn operationally-relevant research that can lead to better warnings. The following storm chase account comes from meteorologist Scott Blair, who followed a long-lived supercell and a family of tornadoes on April 14, 2012.

Convection was ongoing when I approached a tornado-warned supercell near Ellinwood, KS by mid-afternoon. I quickly moved into a good viewing position and observed my first tornado of the day west of St. John, KS. I wasn't able to acquire a good view of the tornado as it was rain-wrapped from my vantage point. After a few minutes, the tornado either dissipated or disappeared in the rain. I quickly repositioned to the northeast and prepared for the potential of another tornado. As luck would have it, a tornado developed within a mile of my location north of Hudson, KS. While the tornado was fully condensed for just a short period, a ground circulation persisted for nearly 5 minutes underneath a lowered bowl. The circulation crossed my road in a weakened state and dissipated shortly after. The parent storm also met a rapid demise and merged with a stronger supercell immediately to its southwest.

The trailing supercell near Raymond, KS became the dominant supercell following the lead storm's demise. The storm developed a large wet hook to the south of a concentrated area of rotation. An initial swirl of dust underneath a tight wall cloud northeast of Lyons, KS, signaled the beginning of the Kanopolis Lake tornado. The tornado rapidly became a legit wedge tornado before disappearing from my vantage point in precipitation. I promptly notified the National Weather Service in Wichita with the ground-truth report.

I quickly repositioned by driving north on Highway 14, then east on Highway 4 towards Crawford, KS. I lost visual of the tornado for a solid seven minutes while in moderate precipitation, but my visibility improved west of Crawford as I drove past the leading edge of the forward-flank precipitation, revealing the ongoing tornado. The width of the vortex had narrowed some by this time, but the rotational velocities appeared more intense. Highway 4 provided a very unique opportunity to closely parallel the tornado for over a 3 mile stretch as the road and vortex moved in a northeast fashion. I was able to ob-

April 14th **continues Page 9**

Impact Based Warning Test Project

By Chad Omitt, Warning Coordination Meteorologist

Beginning April 2nd, the National Weather Service office in Topeka, KS began taking part in a severe weather warning pilot project that runs through October 2012. This is an Impact Based Warning pilot project that is not aimed at the general public. The target audience for this project is our Emergency Management and Media partners. The goals of this project are to:

- Improve communication of risk
- Highlight potential impacts
- Make important information easier to find within the warning message

The main changes to the warnings are the addition of "tags" or short descriptors at the end of a warning, and are considered supplemental data (generally not seen by the public). We will issue severe thunderstorm warnings (SVR) as we have in the past and continue to add hail and wind tags at the very bottom of the warning as we have in the past. However, if we are anticipating the hail size to be 2.75 inches (baseball size) or larger and/or the winds to be 80 mph or greater, the follow up statement will include within the body of the warning "This is a very dangerous storm".

In ***rare*** cases, a particular storm may have a small potential for a tornado (landspout, squall line tornado) and the forecaster's confidence is too low to issue a tornado warning. Therefore, within the initial severe t-storm warning or follow-up severe weather statement a "Tornado...possible" tag may be appended within

Impact Warning continues Page 5

To Warn *Continued...*

"This "ground truth" information from storm spotters is priceless for the radar warning operators as it provides much needed information about what is happening below the radar beam. "

detailed information and accurate warnings.

During severe weather operations at the NWS Topeka office, there may be 1 to 3 individuals devoted purely to interrogating the radar, identifying specific threats and threat areas, and creating the warnings. Each of these radar warning operators will have an assistant who filters and provides specific information to the radar warning operator, interrogates radar data from other nearby radars, adds detail to the warning description, and provides detailed information directly to emergency management, broadcast media, and other public safety partners. Another meteorologist will be dedicated to examining changes in the environment around the storms. This may range from identifying very detailed and subtle frontal boundaries and wind shifts to increases in wind shear and instability, as these minor details can be very important to the severity of a storm. Up to 3 more meteorologists seek out information from people located near the storms in order to determine what is truly happening within a storm. This "ground truth" information is priceless for the radar warning operators as it provides much needed information about what is happening below the radar beam. Additional individuals are in charge of making sure that the entire operation runs smoothly, continuing to provide daily forecast information, and providing interviews to local, national, and international media.

A stream of incoming data from radar, ground truth information, and environmental observations is continuously fed to the radar warning operators. Ultimately, the final decision to warn or not to warn rests in the hands of those few individuals who have worked years to make the best decisions they can based on the available information. If the radar warning operator decides that a storm will likely become severe or produce a tornado in the near future, the area with the highest threat will be highlighted by a warning box around the area at risk. Then, beyond the warning box itself, additional decisions are made regarding the most likely threats. Some of the specific decisions include: How great is the threat for tornadoes? What will be the size of the largest hail? How strong will the winds be? What counties and cities will be affected? All of this information is then placed into a standard format and sent out to the world via broadcast media, internet, text messages and a myriad of other mediums with

To Warn continues Page 7

Impact Warning Test *Continued...*

the supplemental data at the very bottom of the warning. This allows those in decision making positions an opportunity to follow that particular storm a bit closer and monitor for a potential upgrade to a tornado warning. This tag will not occur with every SVR warning issued within a tornado watch. As for tornado warnings, they will continue to be issued as they have in the past. However, if by using our scientific expertise in analyzing environmental conditions, interrogating radar data, and utilizing spotters or storm chasers observing the storm we feel a greater threat for significant damage is possible or is occurring, we will add a tag (i.e. Tornado damage threat...significant). The tag will be located at the bottom of the warning to better convey risk, potential impacts and do so in a format that allows the most important information to be found quickly within the warning message. Once again, this will not require a new warning be issued. Instead, this information will be appended to the bottom of a follow up severe weather statement or at the bottom of the warning.

In ***exceedingly rare*** cases the tag (Tornado damage threat...catastrophic) may be utilized when a confirmed tornado poses a severe threat to human life and catastrophic damage from a tornado is imminent or ongoing. The NWS does have the option to issue a new warning if this is expected as it may be in everyone's best interest to be alerted again for such a catastrophic event. Within the body of the warning, the phrase "A tornado emergency for _____ city" will be added into the warning text. ***Once again, the use of this tag would be exceedingly rare and would only be used when reliable sources confirm a tornado or there is clear radar evidence of the existence of a damaging tornado such as the observation of a debris/damage signature.***

Lastly, the NWS is working very closely with social scientists throughout this entire project. They along with our partners (media, emergency managers, and private vendors) will provide input throughout the project to help evaluate the effectiveness of the changes. To provide your input on this IBW project please visit http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=IBW For more information please contact Warning Coordination Meteorologist Chad Omitt at chad.omitt@noaa.gov.

"The main changes to the warnings are the addition of "tags" or short descriptors at the end of a warning and are considered supplemental data ."

Impact Based Warnings will Enhance Current Efforts

1. Impact Based Warnings will improve communication of critical information
2. Enhanced format will make it easier to parse out the most valuable information, quickly
3. Will enable you to prioritize the key warnings in your coverage area
4. Provides different levels of warning, within the same product
5. A particular warning might highlight a storm that is particularly dangerous
6. This allows users and vendors to develop apps and tools for the public and broadcast meteorologists to better communicate areas of increased risk
7. Tags will enable the NWS to express a level of confidence of potential impacts

Examples of Tags

Tornado Tags

TORNADO...RADAR INDICATED
Evidence on radar and near storm environment is supportive, but no confirmation.

TORNADO...OBSERVED
Tornado is confirmed by spotters, law enforcement, etc.

Tornado Damage Threat Tag

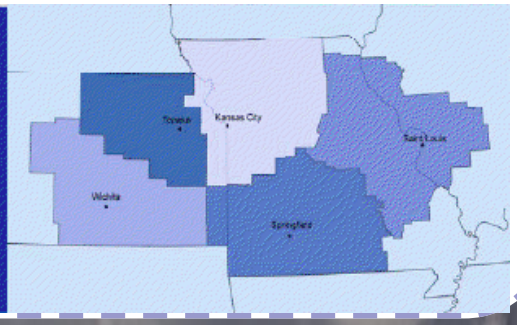
TORNADO DAMAGE THREAT...SIGNIFICANT
When there is credible evidence that a tornado, capable of producing significant damage, is imminent or ongoing.

TORNADO DAMAGE THREAT...CATASTROPHIC
When a severe threat to human life and catastrophic damage from a tornado is occurring, and will only be used when reliable sources confirm a violent tornado.

Tornado Tags for Severe Thunderstorm Warnings

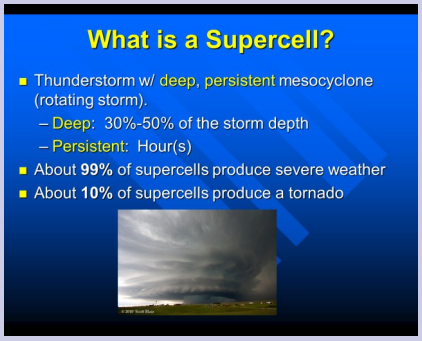
TORNADO...POSSIBLE
A severe thunderstorm has some potential for producing a tornado although forecaster confidence is not high enough to issue a Tornado Warning.

The goal is to provide more information to the media and Emergency Managers, to facilitate improved public response and decision making; and to better meet societal needs in the most life-threatening weather events.



Spotter Training *Continued...*

Figure 2

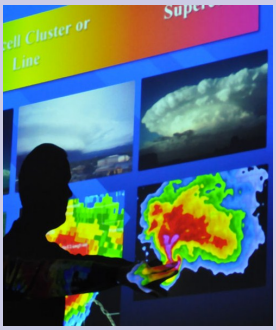


The storm spotter training season has come to an end for the year, however continuing education is extremely important for those that need to understand severe storm cloud features and the processes that lead to their formation. As a result, we are providing supplemental online spotter training. This training is focused on the basics of convective weather and storm structure. We strongly encourage all county spotters and others who are interested in becoming spotters to complete this training as an introduction into basic concepts. This training takes around one hour and can be accessed at https://www.meted.ucar.edu/training_module.php?id=816

We also have a new and improved storm spotter reference guide for download.

In addition, the National Weather Service office in Oklahoma City has produced effective short videos that touch on various topics associated with being a storm spotter. Those videos can be accessed at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/?n=onlinespottertraining

Over the past 3 years the National Weather Service in Topeka along with our emergency management and media partners have provided training to over 10,000 people across Northeast Kansas. As we look ahead to the future we are seeking additional, effective means of training and educating residents of Northeast Kansas about the morphology of severe thunderstorms and the hazards they can produce. It is likely that more online and remote training will be done to supplement the live, in-person training throughout the area each spring. Regardless, the National Weather Service along with our media and emergency management partners will continue to work together to provide severe weather training and education for those that live across Northeast Kansas. We hope that you will also continue to use the additional on-line resources to learn more about severe weather and how to best keep you and your family safe. For any questions or concerns regarding storm spotter training please contact Warning Coordination Meteorologist Chad Omitt



Active April *Continued...*

hail size reported with these storms was 1.5" near Summerfield. The second round of storms moved into the area a few hours later, and included the aforementioned tornado, which caused damage near Niles, Manchester, and Talmage. Another round of thunderstorms moved into the area around midnight and brought more large hail, and possibly a tornado or two. The largest hail measured from these storms was 4.5 inches in diameter near Randolph. By 3:00 a.m., the storms finally weakened to a point that severe weather was no longer a concern.

The next round of severe weather occurred on April 27th when several severe storms formed across central Kansas on Friday April 27, 2012. At least two brief tornadoes formed from these storms. The second tornado of the day formed just north of Council Grove around 6:00 PM. This tornado was also brief, and did not cause any damage. Aside from the tornadoes these storms also produced marginal severe hail, with a few larger hailstones mixed in. The largest hail stones of the afternoon were reported near Harveyville and 2 miles southwest of Topeka where golf ball sized hail fell. The storms were fast moving and quickly exited the area to the east shortly after sunset that evening. Luckily, no major damage or injuries were reported with these storms.

Unfortunately, severe weather season is still active as additional rounds of severe storms are likely for Northeast Kansas so it is important to prepare a plan, practice it, and stay alert to the ever changing weather conditions. Additional information on climate information for the upcoming spring and summer months can be found at:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

Severe weather safety information, items for a disaster kit, and much more can be found at the following website:

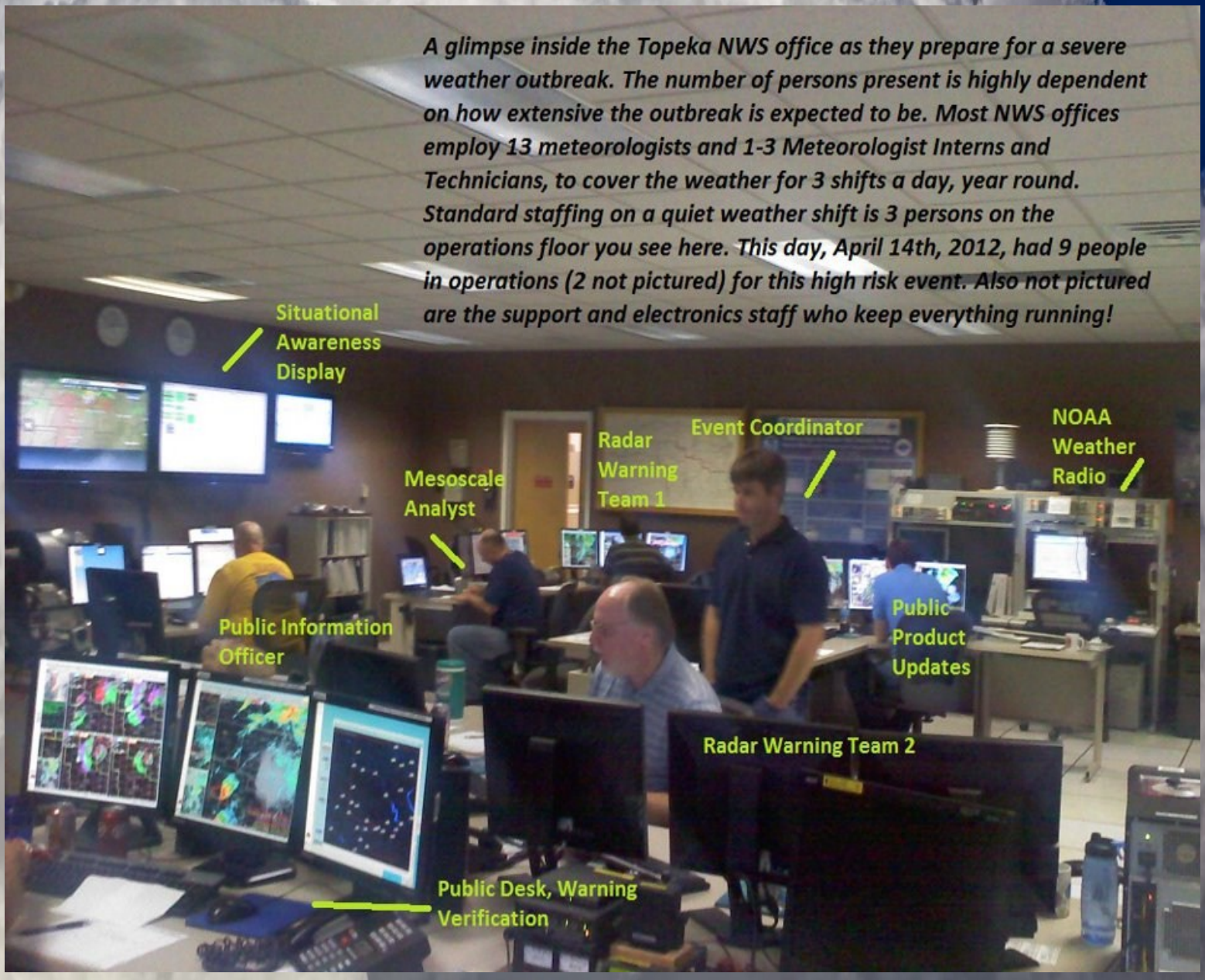
http://www.crh.noaa.gov/top/?n=wxprep

To Warn *Continued...*

the ultimate goal that everyone in the warned area will take the appropriate actions to protect themselves. It is a complicated and highly involved process that is all typically completed in less than 60 seconds.

National Weather Service severe weather operations are intense, difficult, and occasionally stressful. However, you can rest assured that NWS meteorologists work incredibly hard before, during, and after severe weather in order to provide the most accurate and detailed warnings possible with the ultimate NWS goal of protecting lives and property.

Photo caption: The operations area at NWS Topeka while severe weather is occurring in Northeast Kansas.



Cooperative Observer Corner

By Michael Couch , Observation Program Leader

On the Left: Donald Whitebread of Junction City, Kansas, proudly accepts the John Campanius Holm Award, recognizing his outstanding contributions to the Cooperative Observer Program. Don also received the Edward H. Stoll Award at the luncheon, recognizing his 50 years of service. Don has been serving the Cooperative Observer Program by taking river readings for Clark's Creek using a wire weight gauge. For most of the 50 years, Don has also been providing daily precipitation measurements. A large group was in attendance at a local restaurant, including Don's wife Florence, and their three children, Donnie, Cleion and Crystal. State Representative Jim Fawcett also made the trip to honor Don. Presenting the award are NWS Central Region Director Lynn Maximuk and NWS Topeka Observing Program Leader Michael Couch.

Thank you Coop Observers for your continued dedicated hard work and support!

On the Right: Marvin and Eudora Petersen of Concordia, KS were recently presented with an award recognizing their 15 years of service to the Cooperative Weather Observer Program. Since 1997, Marvin and Eudora have been providing quality temperature, precipitation and snowfall data to the National Weather Service from their home in Concordia. The award was presented by Michael Couch, Observing Program Leader from the NWS Forecast office in Topeka, KS.

On the Left: Maurice Heiman of Baileyville, Kansas, proudly accepts his 30 year Length of Service award. Since November of 1981, Maurice has been providing quality precipitation and temperature measurements from his home south of Baileyville. The award was presented by Michael Couch, Observing Program Leader from the NWS Forecast office in Topeka KS.

Joseph Kennedy of Circleville, Kansas was presented with his 40 year Length of Service award at a luncheon on December 19th, 2011. Joseph has been providing precipitation measurements from his home south of Soldier Kansas since March of 1971. Joseph is a very humble man and was too camera shy to have his photo taken with the award. The award was presented by Michael Couch, Observing Program Leader from the NWS Forecast office in Topeka KS.

Carol Linden of Lebo Kansas was presented with a 20 year Length of Service Award in April. During her twenty years of service, Carol has been providing quality precipitation and snowfall measurements from her home in Lebo. As a "weather enthusiast", Carol has also been very helpful with severe storm spotting. The award was presented by Michael Couch, Observing Program Leader from the NWS Forecast office in Topeka KS.

April 14th, *Continued...*

serve intricate details of the tornado within a one mile range for about 5 minutes. Several supplemental narrow vortices condensed on the periphery of the parent vortex and quickly became ingested. This is usually a sign of intense vertical motion in tornadoes. I decided to position further down Highway 4 where the road makes an east turn. I judged the trajectory of the tornado and stopped on an east-facing hill that would presumably contain a favorable view of the vortex crossing the road. The tornado's audible waterfall-roar was very impressive as it approached the road. Most of the precipitation had ended at my location, and the high-contrast combined with the rapidly rotating tornado made for a spectacular sight. The circulation crossed the road approximately one-quarter mile east of my location, lofting pieces of vegetation high into the sky.

I crossed the damage path along Highway 4 where several trees had been severely damaged. The tornado unfortunately struck a farmstead shortly after crossing the road, resulting in an EF4 damage rating. The violent tornado continued on its northeast journey across the sparsely populated countryside. The flat and colorful terrain of the Smoky Hill River basin made for a very picturesque sight. As the tornado exited the river basin, it effortlessly climbed rougher terrain. It was interesting to watch it move up one particular hill with a 200 foot rise in elevation.

The long-lived tornado was gradually becoming disrupted and eventually dissipated by the time I reached Lindsborg, KS near I-135. I contemplated ending the chase, but chose otherwise once the updraft came back into view southwest of Salina, KS. The lowered base ominously made a few attempts of a tornado as it passed over Salina, but luckily waited to just east of the city limits. A new tornado developed two miles south of I-70 and was characterized

by occasional dust whirls underneath a tightening condensation lowering. These nearly transparent vortices visually appeared relatively innocent until a large power flash emanated from one of the dusty whirls. Condensation associated with the tornado gradually improved in shape, with a cone tornado nearing I-70. I decided to pull off on top of a hill for a better view just shy of the Niles Road exit at mile marker 260. The tornado organized into several dancing dusty vortices as it crossed I-70 just west of the Niles Road exit.

The tornado further organized north of I-70 with impressive multi-vortex action. The vortices were more frequently accompanied by full condensation as it entered Ottawa and Dickinson Counties. The tornadic circulation evolved into a stovepipe tornado, and this structure lasted for nearly ten minutes. As sunset approached, a golden hue overspread much of the sky. I was exhausted from the intense chase day and elected not to pursue the storm north of I-70. While driving home, the tornado put on an impressive final show, roping out and stretching across the horizon.

Notes From The Editor

New, User-Friendly Website to be Unveiled

www.weather.gov/topeka

If you have been following the National Weather Service website lately (www.weather.gov/topeka), you have noticed previews of the newly designed website set to be released in the upcoming months. This website has been redesigned to provide users with easy access to climate information, local forecasts, fire weather, hydrological data, and weather safety to name a few. The preview for the site was released a few months ago with opportunities for the public to send comments and suggestions. We appreciated all of the feedback submitted and look forward to the new benefits and functionalities the website has to offer.

Emergency Alerts On Mobile Devices

The National Weather Service in coordination with FEMA, The FCC (Federal Communications Commission) and CTIA (The Wireless Association) will start sending out free Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) beginning June 2012. Anytime the National Weather Issues a warning for the county you are located in, the WEA will be broadcast from area cell towers to mobile devices in the area, similar to how weather alerts are sent to local TV. No registration is required as most cellular companies will automatically provide this service. In addition to weather alerts, other civil emergencies such as evacuations, AMBER Alerts, and national emergencies will also be sent. For more information on the WEA system, visit the following website:

http://www.weather.gov/topeka

"Click on *Severe Weather Alerts* on the front page."

New Faces at Topeka Office

The staff here at the weather forecast office is pleased to welcome two new employees to Topeka. The new Electronic Technician, Michael Humphreys began in February 2012. Michael was a retired veteran of six years in the Air Force before he began at the NWS in Cleveland, Ohio as an Electronics Technician. Michael is originally a Kansan, born in the small town of Liberty, Kansas, just outside of Independence.

Although not appearing in the office until July 2012, Kris Sanders will be our new Meteorologist Intern. Kris comes from the St. Louis Weather Forecast Office where he worked as a SCEP (Student Intern). While assisting the office, he earned his Master's Degrees in Meteorology from St. Louis University. We welcome both employees to Topeka and know they will contribute greatly to the success of the office.

Promotions and New Beginnings

Congratulations to former Meteorologist Intern, Matt Anderson on his recent February 2012 promotion to Journeyman Forecaster at the Weather Forecast Office in Birmingham, Alabama. We were honored to have Matt as part of the office team and appreciated all of his contributions and projects accomplished.

Kelsey Angle, a former Senior Forecaster at WFO Topeka also was promoted to Decision Support Meteorologist at Central Region Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri back In October 2011. Kelsey was a hard-working, spirited individual that accomplished many projects and tasks during his time at the office.

We also are saying congratulations and farewell to Observation Program Leader, Michael Couch. Mike has accepted a position as a Remote Officer-In-Charge and Cooperative Program Manager in Anchorage, Alaska. Mike had various responsibilities, but was primarily the leader in the Cooperative Observer Program, upper air, and trainer of new Meteorologist Interns for 4 years. ,

We wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors!

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Topeka, Kansas

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Topeka, Kansas 66616

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E-mail: w-top.webmaster@oaa.gov
Editor: Jenifer Bowen, Meteorologist Intern

"Working together to save lives"

Severe Weather Spotter Card

Weather to Report:

Hail (report any size)

Strong wind gusts (58+ MPH)

Any notable wind damage to trees, homes, businesses

Funnel Cloud/ Rotating Wall Cloud or Tornado

What to Include in your Report:

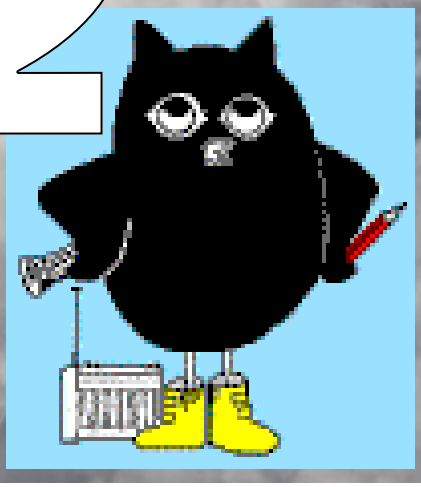
Your Name and/or Call Sign (Spotter Number)

Your Location

Exact Location of Event

Time and Date of Event

Owlie Skywarn says:
"Check out our website for the latest forecast, severe weather support, and past weather information:
www.weather.gov/top."



Comments or suggestions for the next newsletter?
Feel free to email us at:
w-top.webmaster@noaa.gov