

Weather
CornerWarmer,
partly cloudy

The forecast

Tonight — Partly cloudy with a low around 43. Southwest wind around 5 mph. **Tuesday** —

Partly cloudy with a high near 71. North wind between 5 and 10 mph. **Tuesday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 47. Southeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west. **Wednesday** —

Partly cloudy with a high near 74. West wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south. **Wednesday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 43. **Thursday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 78.

Temperatures

Sunday's high, 69

Low this morning, 44

Records for this date, 94 in 1934, 24 in 1917

Precipitation last 24 hours, 0.00

May's precipitation, 0.11

A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-8367.

Briefly

Flower expert to speak in Colby

The Thomas County Extension Office is sponsoring an expert in flower research from 5 to 6 p.m., Tuesday, at the office complex meeting room, 350 S. Range Ave. Alan Stevens, state floriculture specialist, is an expert in flower research and this is a great opportunity to come and hear him speak on annual and perennial flower selections, flower care and other topics. Anyone interested in attending is asked to call the extension office at 460-4582. RSVP is not required, but would be helpful, extension officials said.

Property taxes due May 10

The Thomas County Treasurer's office is reminding taxpayers that the second half of the 2006 property taxes are due by May 10. For questions, call (785) 460-4520.

Free sports physicals Tuesday

Colby Medical and Surgical Center, 175 S. Range Ave., will again offer free sports physical examinations

to Thomas County middle and high school students between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 8. The times for Colby High School students to arrive at the clinic is 5:30 p.m.; Colby Middle School students at 6 p.m.; and all Brewster and Golden Plains middle and high school students at 6:30 p.m. "Please bring the physical examination forms with you," said Patti Stephens, RN and coordinator of the event. For questions call Stephens at (785) 462-3332.

Slavens offering sports physicals

Slavens Family Practice, 1535 S. Range Ave., will offer free athletic physicals for middle school and high school students in Thomas County from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 16. For information, call 460-8000.

Water well testing available

The Northwest Local Environmental Protection group would like to remind residents of have their private water wells tested, especially with recent moisture and standing

water. The snow melt and recent rain may have allowed contaminants to leach into wells. The group provides free water well testing for nitrates and bacteria. Call 462-8636 for an appointment.

Charter school enrollment open

Thomas County Academy is accepting applications for fall 2007 enrollment. The hands-on, achievement-based environment allows students to master the curriculum using an integrated approach. The school is accepting applications for 20 additional students on a first-come, first-served basis. For information, call principal Diana Wieland at 460-5004.

Ladies' golf set to begin

Women who enjoy golf are invited to play ladies' golf at Meadow Lake Golf Course, which starts Tuesday, May 8. Green fees are \$5 and cost of the game is \$5. Registration is at 5:30 p.m. and golf starts at 6 p.m. Everyone is welcome because the course is now open.

Greensburg residents allowed back into destroyed town

GREENSBURG (AP) — Residents of this tornado-ravaged community were being allowed back home Monday to sift through their wrecked homes, giving rescuers a better idea of whether any of the people still missing might be buried somewhere under the rubble.

Since the tornado hit Friday night, emergency responders have had little indication of how many people in this central Kansas town of 1,500 may be safely staying with friends or relatives, rather than in shelters.

When search and rescue operations resume Monday across flattened neighborhoods, the carefully orchestrated reopening may help provide some of those answers.

Only residents will be allowed back into town at 8 a.m. Law enforcement officials will be checking

identification and compiling a list of people whose whereabouts still haven't been determined. Residents must leave again by 6 p.m.

Fresh search and rescue dogs will be brought in Monday from Missouri as the hunt for possible survivors and bodies continues across a landscape dotted with mounds of debris, some as deep as 30 feet.

At least 10 people are known dead from weekend storms — eight in the Greensburg area and two others elsewhere in Kansas state officials said.

Annette Gasten, a paramedic from Olathe, and her German shepherd dog, Greta, spent Sunday searching.

She was among of six handlers and dogs from the Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association that joined the search effort.

No one was found Sunday in the debris.

"Even though I have been to other disasters, this one was a lot worse — the amount of damage," Gasten said. "It is such a large area that was destroyed that it made it difficult" to search.

Her dog, which is trained to indicate both live and dead victims, whined at a couple of locations to indicate an area of interest, but further searches found nothing, Gasten said.

On Monday, Federal Emergency Management Agency director R. David Paulison was scheduled to join city and state officials in a tour of Greensburg.

City Administrator Steve Hewitt said his job Monday would be to get city government working again. He said he needed to find employees, get purchase orders out, pay employees and bills — in short, create commerce again in Greensburg.

"Get government going — that is our No. 1 priority," Hewitt said.

School superintendent Darin Headrick said classes will be canceled for the rest of the academic year, with graduation being held elsewhere. When school resumes in August, the district, which has about 300 students, will hold classes in other communities.

"Our teachers will have jobs; our kids will have classrooms to attend," he promised. "This is going to be a huge hurdle for people to overcome, but it will also be a huge opportunity."

The National Weather Service classified the Friday night tornado as an enhanced F-5, the highest category on its scale. The weather service said it had wind estimated at 205 mph, and carved a track 1.7 miles wide and 22 miles long. The last tornado that strong killed 36 people in Oklahoma City on May 3, 1999, the weather service said.

Tree trunks stood bare in Greensburg, stripped of most of their branches. All the churches were destroyed. Every business on Main Street was demolished, and the town's fire engines were crushed.

The massive concrete silos of a grain elevator towered over the flattened expanse of what was left of the town. City officials estimate as much as 95 percent of the town was destroyed.

On Sunday, the weather service posted tornado warnings during the afternoon for parts of Kansas and Oklahoma, and severe thunderstorm warnings were extended across parts of Missouri, Kansas,

Oklahoma and Texas.

FEMA regional administrator Dick Hainjew said the agency was bringing in travel trailers to house some of the town's residents. There was no indication when people would be able to move into the trailers because the area was choked with debris and the town had no clean water.

President Bush declared parts of Kansas a disaster area, freeing up federal money to aid in recovery.

"There's a certain spirit in the Midwest of our country, a pioneer spirit that still exists, and I'm confident this community will be rebuilt," Bush said.

Some residents were less optimistic.

"If I hear that people are going to stay and we're going to have a school, then I'll stay," said Greensburg High School shop teacher Peter Kern, who had lived in the town for the last year. "If we don't have a school, I don't have a job."

The Greensburg twister late Friday was part of a storm front that also spawned tornadoes in parts of Illinois, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Nebraska, though most damage elsewhere was minimal, officials said.

Administrator known for leadership

GREENSBURG (AP) — One day after he gave voice to his tornado-ravaged town's anguish as well as its hope, Greensburg's city administrator was back at work to get the recovery effort going.

"It is devastating, obviously," Steve Hewitt said Sunday. "It is going to be a long road ahead of us."

After the storm, Hewitt, who as the town's highest non-elected official is charged with its day-to-day operations, was in near-constant touch with state and federal emergency agencies.

"He has been tireless," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the state's adjutant general and its director of emergency management. "We're doing all we can to help him. We keep telling him, 'Steve, there's a couple of places where you can lie down if you want to take a nap. We'll be quiet for you.'"

Hewitt was already working on emergency operations just hours after the tornado tore through Greensburg, a state lawmaker who survived the storm said.

"I saw him Friday night," said Rep. Dennis McKinney, D-Greensburg. "His home's destroyed, his family's in a remote location, and he's got two department heads there going over what has to be done, how it's going to function, what teams are going to function, laying out a plan of action."

"That's exactly what a leader should do," McKinney said. "He's got them on a mission. He's calm, he's analytical and he's got his team focused."

As city administrator, Hewitt will oversee the recovery effort. He'll be responsible for making sure the city's infrastructure and services are rebuilt, and he'll be coordinating with state and federal agencies.

Hewitt, whose background is in

parcs and recreation, has been the Greensburg administrator for about a year. Even before the storm, he had established a reputation for active leadership and community improvement.

"He's been a good force of direction for the city," said school district superintendent Darin Headrick, who has served with Hewitt on several community boards. "He brings a lot of good ideas, a lot of experience, a lot of vision as to not only what Greensburg is, but what we hope it will be."

"Obviously, this kind of changes the plans that we had and makes us come up with new plans."

At a news conference Saturday, Hewitt pleaded for help in rebuilding Greensburg.

"We want everybody to know, and I plead to the American people as well as the people here in Kansas, this is a huge catastrophe that has happened to our small town," Hewitt said. "All my downtown is gone. My home is gone. My staff's homes are gone. And we've got to find a way to get this to work and come to work every day and get this thing back on its feet. It's going to be tough."

He also promised, though, that the town of 1,500 would recover.

"We'll rebuild," Hewitt said. "It'll take time, but we'll rebuild this city. It's a scary thought, the number of homes that were destroyed."

For the most part, though, Hewitt stayed out of the spotlight Sunday.

"What he is trying to do is that his

focus has changed from the interview side to concentrating what he can do as far as cleanup," said trooper Ronald Knoefel, a spokesman for the Kansas Highway Patrol. "He's refocusing on his people, and I don't think you're going to see him much."

Hewitt, who spoke briefly at an afternoon briefing, played down his own losses.

"I am just like anybody," he said. "I am no different than anybody else. A lot of people had worse losses than we did."

Now, Greensburg residents say, leadership and vision will go a long way toward determining whether the town can go on.

"We've had a heck of a leadership program here," high school shop teacher Peter Kern said. "Hopefully, that's the kind of leadership that's going to get us through."

That leadership will be tested in the coming months, though.

"You have all these homes and businesses destroyed," said Dick Hainje, a regional administrator for FEMA.

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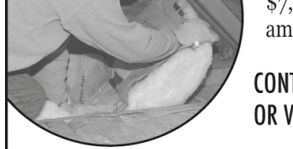
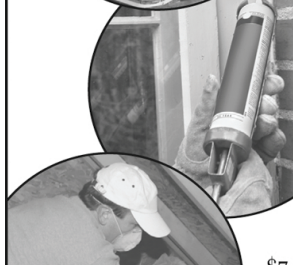
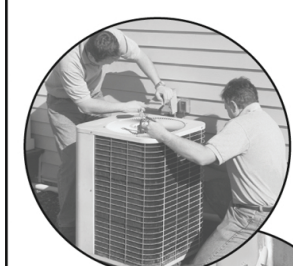


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