

May 2008 big tornado month in northwest Kansas, 26 reported

The month of May 2008 in northwest Kansas was noteworthy both in terms of the number of tornadoes as well as their intensity. Twenty-six tornadoes occurred during the month (25 in Kansas and 1 in extreme eastern Colorado) which set a new record for May in the Goodland warning area.

May 22 and 23 were back-to-back major tornado days, with 11 tornadoes occurring each day, including five EF1-EF2 tornadoes on the 22nd, and four EF1-EF4 tornadoes on the 23rd. The most significant tornado (rated EF4, photo left) developed in Gove County 9 miles southwest of Quinter on May 23.

It was the first tornado rated (E)F4 in the Goodland 19 county warning area since 1990. This wedge tornado produced \$2.5 million dollars in damage and completely destroyed a home and severely damaged about a dozen others.

Two injuries occurred with this tornado. One occurred on I-70 when a vehicle was rolled into a ditch as the storm crossed the Interstate.

The second occurred when a resident was hit with debris while attempting to enter his outdoor, underground storm shelter. Baseball hail and lowland flooding also accompanied these storms.

June was another active tornado month with 11 tornadoes (five in Kansas, six in eastern Colorado).

Every tornado was rated EF0 with path lengths under a mile and time on the ground ranging from 1 to 6 minutes. In Kansas, 43 severe hail reports and 8 high wind reports were received from spotters and law enforcement during the month. On June 22, the first day of our lightning awareness campaign, ironically three workers were shocked when lightning struck their natural gas drilling rig during the evening. Two were taken to a nearby hospital, treated overnight and released.

The weather in July was fairly typical of midsummer in terms of severe reports. The number of tornadoes dropped off considerably with only one tornado reported (eastern Sherman County, seen from the NWS office). Meanwhile, the number of microburst, moderate hail and isolated flooding reports held constant. One noteworthy intense microburst event occurred in Wallace County just south and east of Sharon Springs on July 17. Car ports and tree limbs were damaged, and utility poles were broken. A shop building was also heavily damaged with winds estimated at 80 mph.

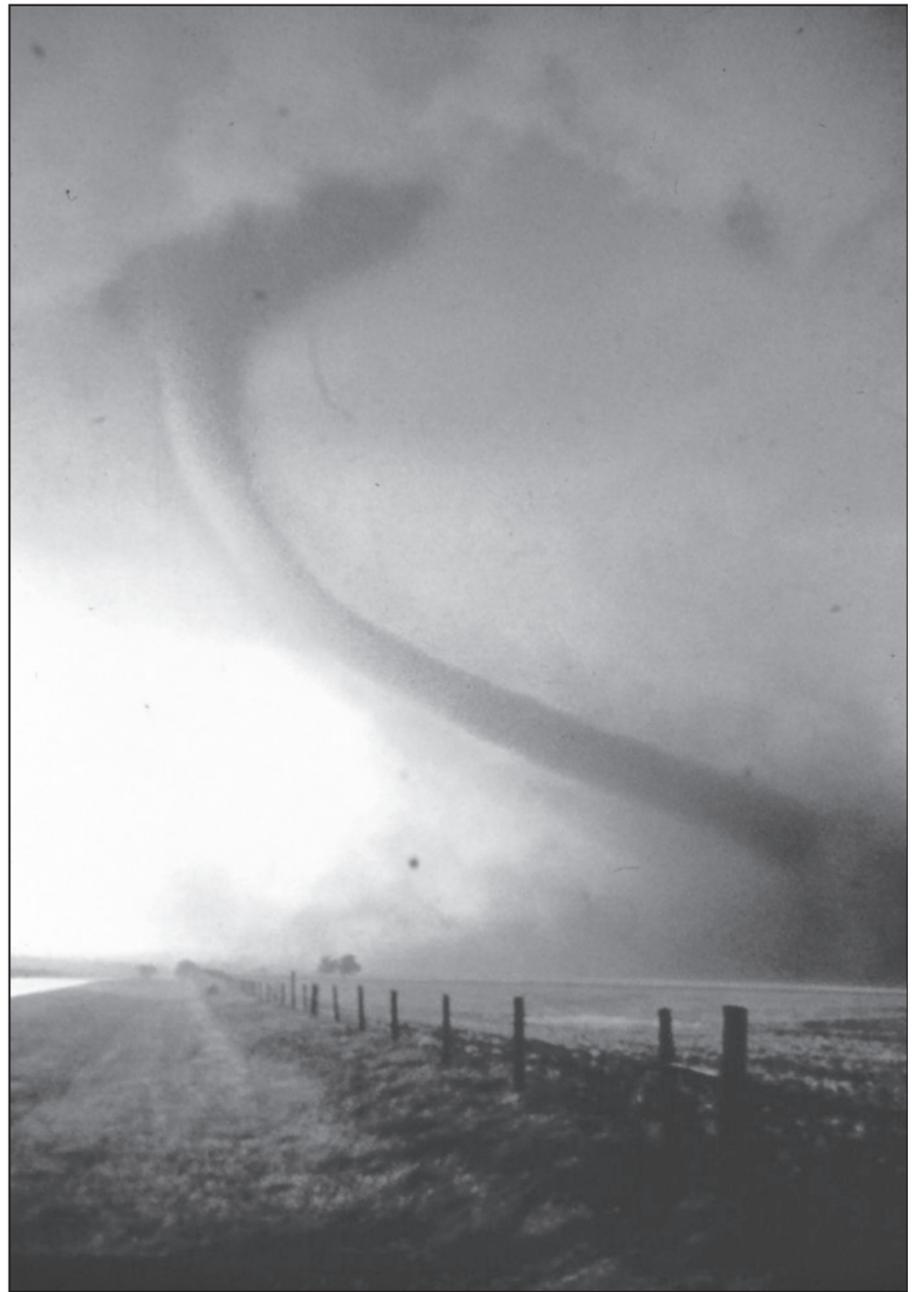
August was a quiet weather month with only 7 severe reports received from the 13 Kansas counties served by Goodland. Most severe reports were wind related. A strong, but localized microburst occurred during the night in Goodland on Aug. 7

which produced minor damage at the Sherman county fairgrounds during fair week. Tents and outdoor game booths were damaged, resulting in \$22,000 in damage. Another intense straight line wind event occurred in Graham County during the early morning hours on the 14th. The Hill City ASOS measured an 83 mph wind gust, which damaged trees and utility poles in and around town. Many residents were without power.

In September, the most significant event was a flash flood which accompanied extremely heavy rainfall on the 24th. An unofficial report of 10.6 inches was received at the home of a county road department employee just southeast of Grainfield, which agreed well with the radar estimated location of heavy rainfall. Numerous county roads were closed near Park and south of Quinter in Gove County.

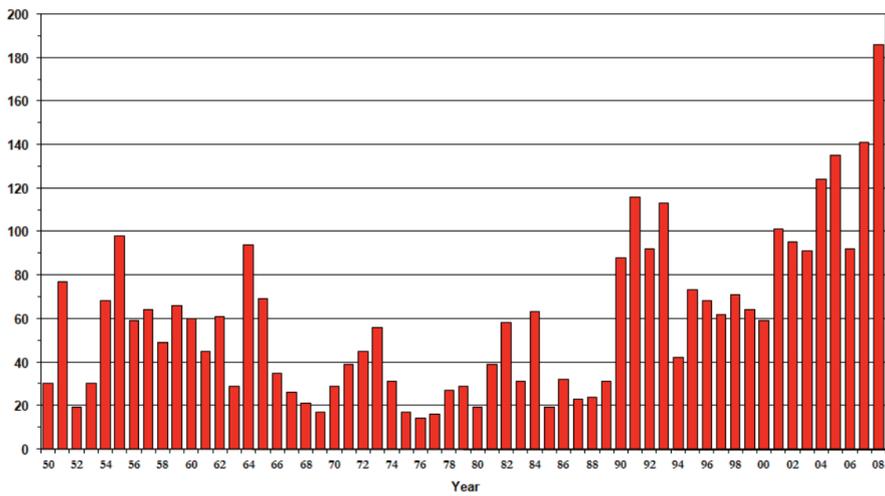
The last tornado of the season was a brief spin-up near Edson on I-70 on Oct. 11 on the leading edge of a line of thunderstorms. No damage was reported.

Thirty-one tornadoes were logged in 2008 in the Kansas counties served by the Goodland office (which serves 3 Colorado, 3 Nebraska and 13 Kansas counties). 2008 is tied for third place (39) in terms of the number of tornadoes occurring in the Goodland office area of responsibility.



This tornado photo was taken at Cordell, Okla., several years ago by the Mississippi State University "Sound Chase" project, whereby sounds of tornadoes were recorded. - Photo courtesy NAOO Photo Library

Kansas Tornadoes



Beware of downed power lines

Tornadoes can do more than destroy buildings, homes and vehicles. They can knock down power lines, which can present a host of problems. You don't have to be touching a power line to be electrocuted. If you see a downed power line:

- (1) Make others in the area aware of the situation and call your power company immediately to report this problem.
- (2) Assume fallen wires are live wires and might be dangerous.
- (3) Don't touch anything that may be in contact with the downed wire. Driving over fallen lines can result in damage to your car's tires.
- (4) If a wire falls on your car and you're in the vehicle, stay inside the automobile if possible. If you must get out of the vehicle, **jump clear of the car with both feet together.** If one foot is in the energized car and the other foot is in contact with the ground, your body will act as a conductor of electricity which can cause injury or death.

Bridges Group, Inc. INSURANCE

"Serving Norton Since 1894"

- Trent Richmond
- Rich Meyers •Trish Fischer
- Dave Donovan •Renee Spresser
- Kayla Weigel •Jeremie Krehbiel

117 N. Kansas - Norton, Kansas 67654
Phone: 785-877-4016

Be Prepared for Rough Weather- See Us for All of Your Oil, Diesel, Propane and Gas Service

NORTON FUEL SERVICE AND NORTON PROPANE SERVICE
206 N. Jones, Norton, KS — 785-877-3218
TOLL FREE 800-953-4985

1ST CHOICE Insurance Agency

Home - Auto - Life
Farm - Crop - Commercial

Property - Auto - Life

DANA HANLON, AGENT

105 W. Main
Norton, KS 67654
785-877-3341

We're Expanding for Your Needs

Bikes - Landscaping Materials Shelving for Closet and Garages Lumber and Cabinets - 10% Off

Kowpoke Supply
Lumber, Hardware & Appliances

COME IN AND LET US SEE WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU!

415 E. Holme, Norton, Kansas - 785-877-3070

AFTER THE STORM We Have Everything One Needs to Rebuild . . .

We Do Electrical, Remodeling, Decks and Blow-in Insulation

DO IT YOURSELVES... We Have All the Tools and Equipment You Will Need!

Lee Hardy Construction LLC and Rental Services
1120 N. State, Norton - 785-874-4315

Almena State Bank Insurance Agency

Homeowners • Auto
Crop • Hail • Personal

Glenn Brands - Agency Manager

Almena State Bank
500 MAIN, ALMENA - 785-669-2486
202 E. WASHINGTON, NORTON - 785-877-2600

Boxler Insurance Agency Inc.

"The Insurance Store"

Crop Hail Insurance Home and Auto

Boxler Insurance Agency Inc.
Established in 1931
108 N. First, Norton, KS - 785-877-5128

S & R READY MIX CONCRETE CO.

We are there to help you make your vision a reality

SEE US FOR ALL OF YOUR SAND, GRAVEL AND CONCRETE NEEDS
206 N. Jones, Norton, Kansas - Phone 877-5346
TOLL FREE — 800-794-4985

We make insurance simple.

1 premium for simplified bill paying policy for your home, vehicles and other possessions deductible for all covered possessions damaged in a single occurrence company with a reputation of honesty and fair-dealing agent to handle it all for you

Joy Johnson
205 N Kansas
Norton, KS
(785) 877-3221

FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES
Insurance • Investments
www.fbfs.com

Auto | Home | Life | Business | College | Retirement

Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company, Western Agricultural Insurance Company, Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, West Des Moines, IA. Companies of Farm Bureau Financial Services © 2009 FBL Financial Group, Inc. M0011 (3-09)