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Monday • August 29, 1994

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**Tornadoes wreck havoc over Wisconsin**

**BIG FLATS, Wis. (AP) —** Shirley Andersen looked up from the floor and saw her house was gone, ripped away by a tornado. A couple in their 60s rode out the storm in their bathtub. The town hall was squashed "like a soda can."

Four people were killed as tornadoes tore across Wisconsin during the night Saturday, ripping up small communities and farms. One tornado gouged a 13-mile-long swath through central Wisconsin and turned this small town's main street into a tangle of metal, lumber and trees.

"All I could think about was all this stuff was going to come down on my head and it was going to hurt," said Shirley Warner, 57, who was staying at a friend's mobile home in Big Flats with her 6-year-old grandson, Nicholas Forslund.

"I tried to pull the mattress over my head but I couldn't get it off the bed. And then all of a sudden, 'Wooooof.' It was over." The woods were torn away and most of the furniture blown out.

Damage from the tornado in Adams County, where Big Flats

is located, was estimated at \$4.5 million, Sheriff Robert Farber said.

The bodies of an elderly couple were found in the wreckage of their home near Big Flats. Twenty-two people were injured and five remained hospitalized Sunday, Farber said. Authorities knew of 24 houses destroyed in Adams County and about 175 damaged.

A tornado in Eau Claire County in western Wisconsin killed a 3-year-old girl when a trailer home was blown into a ditch. A woman riding in a van that was blown off a highway also died.

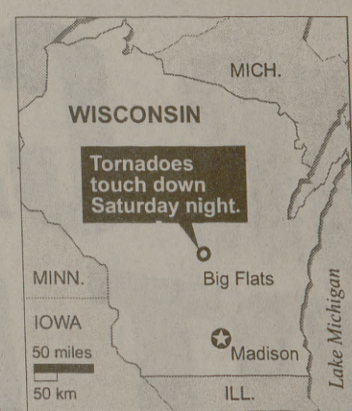
More tornadoes touched down in Green Lake and Juneau counties, wrecking houses and barns and leaving dead cattle in pastures.

Adams County Emergency Government Director Frank Zernia estimated up to 400 of the 740 residents of Big Flats, 80 miles north of Madison, were affected by the tornado. The town sits in a flat, heavily wooded area of potato farms and vacation homes.

Trees were draped with pink insulation, power lines lay across roads and broken glass

and splintered boards were scattered throughout the area. The buzz of chainsaws working to clear fallen trees from yards and roadways seemed nonstop on Sunday.

The only recognizable feature of what used to be the town hall was the concrete vault used to



store public documents. The sheet metal siding was strewn a few hundred yards away in a field, crumpled like a wad of paper.

National Guard Capt. Scott Meske, one of the 40 servicemen sent to the area, said the

municipal building looked as though it was crushed "like a soda can."

Big Flats residents Bob Geiger, 65, and his wife, Marion, 60, rode out the storm in their bathtub as their roof was torn off and windows shattered.

Geiger said they crawled into the tub because it seemed like the safest place.

"Glass was flying, you could hardly see anything. Things were whirling around," he said. "I was really scared."

Shirley Andersen, 58, looking at the wreckage of her trailer home Sunday morning, said the last thing she remembered before the twister hit was the lights going out and her husband reaching for a candle.

"And that was it. That fast. It was over," she said.

"We hit the floor. It seemed like a half a second later I raised my head up from the floor and looked to the north and there was nothing there. Everything was gone," she said.

Anderson, her husband and two granddaughters escaped without serious injury. All that remained of the trailer home was the foundation.

**Alaskan community faces flooding, isolation as local river violently surges**

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) —** Army helicopters were sent Sunday to evacuate residents of the village of Allakaket after the Koyukuk River surged to its highest level in 40 years.

"We're completely surrounded by water," Allakaket Mayor Agnes Bergman said.

No injuries were reported and nobody was in immediate danger, National Guard Capt. Mike Haller said from Anchorage. One house in Allakaket was uprooted and a neighbor said only the electric wires were keeping it from being swept downstream.

The community of about 175 people is 180 miles northwest of

Fairbanks. The river has been rising because of heavy rains last week in Interior Alaska. It was not expected to crest until Monday at Allakaket.

Most of the village's 35 to 40 homes were flooded with about 4 or 5 feet of water, Haller said.

Allakaket villagers were putting belongings on top of houses and building a heliport on high ground for the evacuation. The town's only airplane landing strip was under 5 feet of water.

Making matters difficult, most of the able-bodied men from the remote, largely Alaska Native community were in the Lower 48 as part of firefighting

crews, Bergman said. Marian Acker took refuge at the school after her cabin flooded.

"I also lost my garden," she said. "I was waiting for the first frost to pull the potatoes out. But they're gone now."

Water was rising at a rate of 1 1/2 inches per hour near the school, where many sought shelter, but would not enter the building until some time Monday, if at all, school principal Mary Moses-Edwin said.

Both Army and National Guard troops were headed to the village in the Army helicopters, Haller said.

"It's real serious, and for the sake of life and limb we're getting

some people in there," Haller said.

The Red Cross was arranging food and housing for an expected 127 evacuees at the Army's Fort Wainwright base in Fairbanks, he said.

Four sections of the Dalton Highway, Alaska's only road north to the Arctic Coast, were washed out Saturday, temporarily stranding truckers and tourists.

"We're looking at the highest flood on that river in our recorded history," National Weather Service hydrologist Paul Meyer said. Records for that section of the river have been kept for 40 years, he said.

**O.J. Simpson's lawyers question credibility of police officer, DNA**

**LOS ANGELES (AP) —** Defense attorneys in the O.J. Simpson case are shifting their attack from the credibility of DNA blood tests to the credibility of a police officer who discovered a bloody glove on Simpson's estate.

Defense attorneys were expected to argue at a hearing Monday that the Los Angeles Police Department should turn over Detective Mark Fuhrman's personnel records to see if he has any past instances of racially motivated wrongdoing.

Simpson's attorneys have claimed in court papers that Fuhrman hates blacks and other minorities and once tried to frame a black suspect.

The Police Department has opposed the defense request, as has Fuhrman, whose attorney portrayed the request as a desperate act.

The defense is also seeking Fuhrman's military records and police department records on other officers tied to the case, including Detectives Philip Vannatter, Tom Lange and Fuhrman's partner,

Ronald Phillips.

In a motion filed earlier this month, the defense claims that Vannatter and Lange lied and concealed facts to obtain a warrant to search Simpson's estate, and that Phillips violated police procedures.

Superior Court Judge Lance Ito will decide whether to make the records available and, if so, which ones.

Last week, Ito ruled the prosecution didn't have to share blood samples the defense said it wanted for independent genetic testing.

Simpson has pleaded innocent to the murders of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson, 35, and her friend, Ronald Goldman, 25.

Discrediting Fuhrman is important to the defense because the glove he said he found the day after the June 12 killings may be among one of the most incriminating pieces of evidence.

Trial is set to begin Sept. 19 with jury selection.

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