

## April 27th Fast Facts

- ◆ **Total number of tornadoes in our County Warning Area (CWA): 39**
- ◆ **Of those, here are the specifics of tracks found:**

EF - 5	3
EF - 4	4
EF - 3	0
EF - 2	6
EF - 1	21
EF - 0	5

- ◆ **Longest tornado path length: 132 miles** (EF-5 tornado that tracked from Hackleburg, AL into southern Tennessee. 2<sup>nd</sup> longest ever in Alabama, only surpassed by the Guin, AL EF-5 from '74)
- ◆ **Largest tornado path width: 1.25 miles** (EF-5 tornado that began just north of Hackleburg, AL and continued northeast, dissipating in Franklin County, TN)
- ◆ **The number of tornado warnings issued from 4am through 9pm on April 27th from the Huntsville NWS Office: 92** (To compare, the office issued a total of 67 for the year 2010)
- ◆ The number of days that many people in the Tennessee Valley went without electricity after a main line connecting to the Browns Ferry Nuclear Power Plant in Limestone County was severed when a tornado damaged power lines coming from the facility: **5-7 days**
- ◆ **This tornado outbreak was the worst on record, surpassing that of April 4, 1974.** More tornadoes occurred and far more damage was incurred with the April 27, 2011 tornado outbreak.
- ◆ **Prior to April 27, 2011, the last EF-5 tornado recorded in the NWS Huntsville CWA occurred during the April 4, 1974 tornado outbreak.**

## Disaster Preparedness

Residents of the Tennessee Valley are no strangers to severe weather. Having a plan in place and knowing what to do when severe weather strikes is very important, and may be the difference between life and death. The NWS in Huntsville prepares communities of North Alabama and Southern Middle Tennessee for WHEN, not IF severe weather strikes.

Here are websites to help you make a disaster preparedness kit for your home:

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)  
**Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.**

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)  
**American Red Cross**



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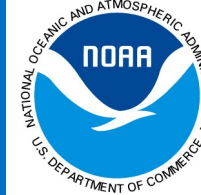


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**NATIONAL WEATHER**  
**SERVICE**  
**Huntsville, AL**

**April 27th, 2011**

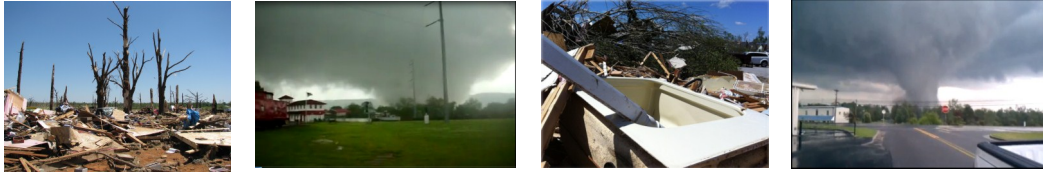
**A Day the**  
**Tennessee Valley**  
**Will Never**  
**Forget**





# April 27th: 3 Rounds of Severe Weather

For days prior to April 27, 2011, forecast models suggested a tornado outbreak across the southeast. Little did the residents of the Tennessee Valley know that they would soon endure the worst tornado outbreak in history.

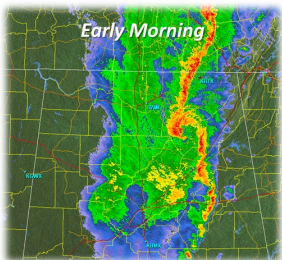


## OVERVIEW

A strong cold front extended from southern Texas northeastward into the lower Ohio Valley. Strong southerly flow across the Tennessee Valley increased moisture and instability across the area. High values of shear were also present, translating to a high tornado threat. On the morning of April 27th, the Storm Prediction Center issued a Moderate Risk for tornadic thunderstorms, which was later upgraded to a High Risk.

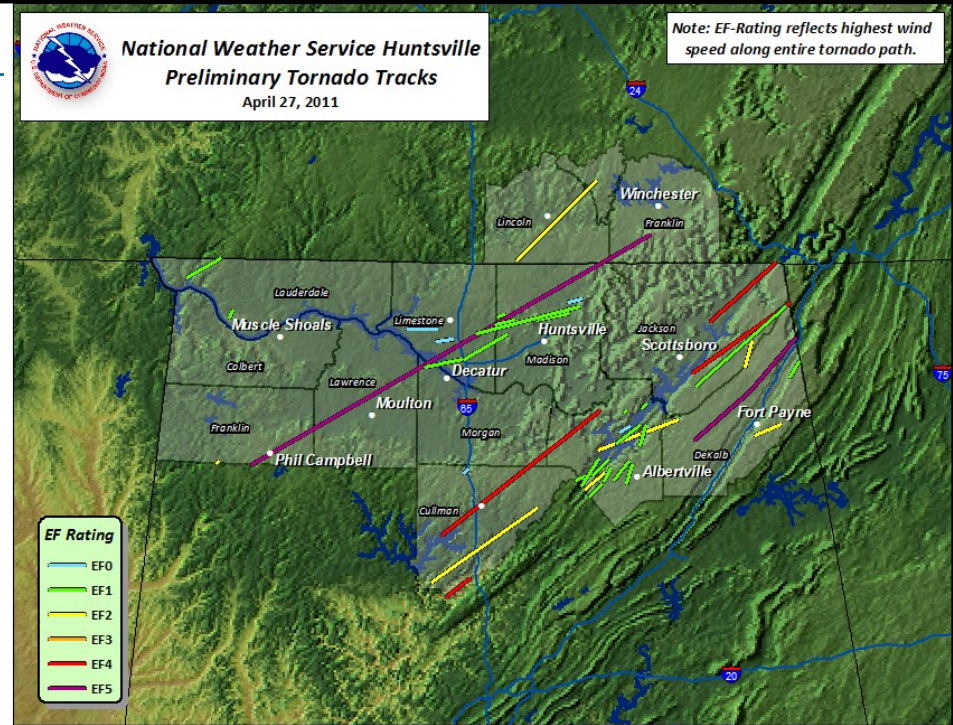
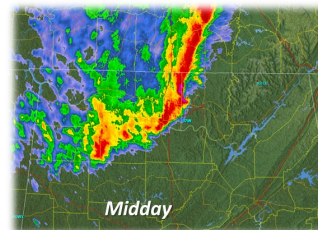
## ROUND 1: EARLY MORNING SQUALL LINE WITH DAMAGING WINDS AND ISOLATED TORNADOES

A line of severe storms moved across the Tennessee Valley just after 2am on April 27th. As a result, a tornado watch was issued for all of north Alabama and portions of Southern Middle Tennessee until 8am. One cell, which began in Cullman county, eventually tracked into extreme northwestern portions of Georgia. This cell produced a tornado, causing damage from Cold Springs to Hanceville to south of Holly Pond in Cullman County. Several reports of straight-line wind damage were also noted with this round.



## ROUND 2: LATE MORNING SQUALL LINE WITH SUPERCELLS

A second line of severe storms pushed across the Tennessee Valley from 8am through 2pm. Supercells also became more numerous through late morning. The Phil Campbell community in Franklin County, AL reported ping-pong ball size hail with this round of severe thunderstorms. Also within the line of severe storms, several weak tornadoes (EF-0 and EF-1) occurred, especially across portions of Limestone and Madison counties from 11:15am through 12:05pm. Wind damage was reported at many locations across the Tennessee Valley. A 69mph wind gust was recorded by weather equipment in Joe Wheeler State Park in Rogersville (Lauderdale County, AL).



## ROUND 3: MARCH OF THE SUPERCELLS

The atmosphere recovered after the previous two rounds of severe weather and became even more unstable by 2:30pm in the afternoon, when the third (and most devastating) round of severe weather began. Shortly after 1pm, the Storm Prediction Center upgraded the current 'Moderate' Risk to a 'High' Risk for severe weather, and a 'Particularly Dangerous Situation' Tornado watch was issued to include all of North Alabama and Southern Middle Tennessee through 9pm. From noon through 9pm that evening, numerous violent (EF-4 and EF-5) tornadoes raked across the Tennessee Valley, causing numerous fatalities and millions of dollars of damage. In all, 106 people lost their lives on this fateful day.

