



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 15, 2021

## **TORNADO, SEVERE STORMS CAUSE \$3.4 MILLION IN DAMAGES IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY**

### ***Disaster Assistance Provided for Residents Affected***

**ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO** – Estimated damages from the tornado and severe storms that ripped through part of St. Charles County on Friday, Dec. 10, are more than \$3.4 million, according to assessments completed by County inspectors. The County’s Building and Code Enforcement Division of the Community Development Department examined 240 structures in a two-day period; 26 structures were destroyed and 20 had major damage.

“Staff in the Community Development Department worked diligently all weekend to make certain we knew what structures were safe to inhabit or enter,” says St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann. “Ameren and Cuivre River Electric responded immediately to our calls for help and power lines were removed from roadways to provide additional safety. Crews immediately began work on restoring power.”

Ehlmann says overall, 72 structures in the tornado’s path were either destroyed, received major or minor damage, or were affected by the storm in some way. Three people were injured, one fatally.

“While any loss of life is a tragedy,” Ehlmann says, “we were fortunate that others were not critically injured, and that more homes and businesses were not destroyed. Anyone who sees photos of the destruction in Defiance or other places where a tornado has touched down should now know what storms such as this can do. When the warning sirens are activated, go to the lowest level of the house or building. In at least one instance in Defiance, the basement was all that was left.”

According to National Weather Service reports the EF3 tornado touched down at approximately 7:30 p.m. west of Defiance on Highway F and traveled approximately 2.5 miles to Highway 94. It followed the Missouri River into St. Louis County, and then back into St. Charles County southeast of Harvester. The major damage was in the Defiance area.

“The response from first responders was incredible,” Ehlmann says, “and shows how this community comes together when needed. Nine fire departments from the area, the St. Charles County Ambulance District, St. Charles County Regional Emergency Management, and St. Charles County Emergency Communications and Police departments were joined by the American Red Cross, AmeriCorps, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Missouri State Highway Patrol to assist with injuries, damages, meals, supplies, and other assistance that was needed. We are fortunate to have such dedicated partners.”

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Ehlmann says clean-up is in process, and the County is scheduling debris pick-up for affected areas to aid property owners who do not have insurance assistance with debris removal. He encourages those who still need assistance to call the Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS, or to follow the St. Charles County Regional Emergency Management Facebook Page for more information.

Additionally, a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC), coordinated by the American Red Cross, is being set up from 4-8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 17, at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 150 Defiance Road in Defiance. The MARC serves as a location for local and state agencies and human service organizations to answer questions and provide information and disaster-related assistance to those impacted by the disaster. Those attending should bring proof of address and dinner will be served.

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***About St. Charles County:***

*St. Charles County, Missouri, founded in 1812, is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri. With a population of 405,262, is it the state's third largest county. It is home to 21 scenic county parks of which four are in reserve, encompassing 4,151 acres.*

*With one of the largest economies in the state, St. Charles County is home to multinational companies including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.*

*St. Charles County Government has more than 1,170 employees in more than 30 departments and offices who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit [sccmo.org](http://sccmo.org).*