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ND, MN Hit by Tornadoes, High Winds

ND Governor Declares Disaster After Tornadoes, 100 mph Winds Hit State and Kills 3

6/22/2025 | 10:55 PM CDT



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Storm Chaser Aaron Rigsby used a drone to videotape the long line of railway cars knocked over by a tornado near Enderlin, North Dakota, as well as some of the cars that were pushed or tossed into a field on Friday night. (Screenshot of Aaron Rigsby video)

OMAHA (DTN) -- North Dakota Gov. Kelly Armstrong declared a statewide disaster Saturday after severe thunderstorms -- including several tornadoes, and strong winds reaching more than 100 mph in some areas -- hit hard late Friday and overnight into Saturday.

Three people died, tens of thousands of people were left without power, rail cars were derailed in more than one location, and storm chasers and people in rural areas posted on social media the structural damage done to buildings, bins and their home on farms in North Dakota and Minnesota. Large hail was also reported, including up to 3 inches in the Jamestown, North Dakota, area.

THREE PEOPLE KILLED

Cass County Sheriff's Office reported Sunday that Michael Dalton Dehn and Katherine Ann Pfaff-Dehn, both 73, and Marcario Machuca Lucio, 89, all of Enderlin, North Dakota, had been killed.

"At approximately 11:40 p.m. on 06/20/25, the Cass County Sheriff's Office was dispatched to rural Enderlin for tornado damage to a residence. Once deputies arrived on the scene, the Enderlin Fire Department let them know that storm chasers had located two deceased people as a result of the tornado. Shortly after learning of this, the Enderlin Fire Department was dispatched to another location, and a third deceased person was found as a result of the tornado," Sheriff Jesse Jahner stated in a press release. ([https://www.facebook.com/...](https://www.facebook.com/)). In a press conference, Sheriff Jahner said it was a very tragic loss of life; he noted a number of the people who responded to the event are rural first responders, "and are familiar with the individuals that are involved in this situation." He added this was a very difficult situation for them to see the loss of life in people they knew, plus it was still an active storm situation when they arrived at the scene to help.

Enderlin's population, 881 people in the 2020 census, is about an hour drive southwest of Fargo.

"Our hearts and sympathies go out to the family and friends of the three North Dakotans who tragically lost their lives in Friday's tornado, and to the close-knit community in Enderlin, which suffered widespread damage," Gov. Armstrong said. "We thank our dedicated first responders and community leaders, including our many volunteer first responders, for their swift action to keep residents safe and help them recover."

Storm Chaser Aaron Rigsby used a drone on Saturday to videotape a long line of railway cars knocked over on their side by that same deadly tornado that was near Enderlin. His video showed how some cars were tossed, or left scrape marks when they were pushed into a field. In his YouTube video ([https://www.youtube.com/...](https://www.youtube.com/)), Rigsby wrote "the same tornado tossed a train car nearly a football field from its original position and violently tore a whole row of train cars off from the tracks and ripped them around the field like it was nothing."

POWER OUTAGES, STORM CLEANUP

The governor's office said approximately 25,000 people remained without power Saturday morning, down from nearly 37,000 overnight. Utility providers worked through the weekend to restore power to affected areas. By Sunday evening, there were 6,381 customers still without power: The three counties showing the most under power were Stutsman County with 3,198 customers (just over 25%), Barnes had 1,383 out (just under 40%), and Ransom 322 (about 9%). ([https://poweroutage.us/...](https://poweroutage.us/))

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The Otter Tail Power Company said at 9 p.m. Sunday on its Facebook page that its "184 dedicated crew members have been out in the field, making steady progress under challenging conditions" from the hot and humid weather.

The power company said, in regards to the Bemidji area of Minnesota, "additional materials and equipment needed for continued restoration arrived throughout the day. Unfortunately, due to extensive damage in the area, we're not yet able to provide an estimated restoration time for specific locations. Crews will be working hard toward full restoration over the next few days, and we hope to provide more targeted updates tomorrow."

Minnesota had 7,142 customers still without power on Sunday night, although this was down from the original 50,000 after the early Saturday storms and 15,000 that still didn't have power on Sunday morning. ([https://poweroutage.us/...](https://poweroutage.us/))

Northern Minnesota had also experienced storms more than 100 mph, according to the National Weather Service.

Weekend cleanup was needed on highways and on railroads through the weekend.

40 Shares

"North Dakota Highway Patrol troopers were ensuring roads stayed safe and assisting with early damage inspections, including an overturned semi. The tornado near Enderlin derailed a dozen empty train tanker cars, and a large derailment of grain cars was reported in Traill County," stated the governor's office.

"The North Dakota Department of Emergency Services will work with impacted communities and infrastructure providers on damage assessments. Citizens are encouraged to be mindful of crews working to restore power and remove debris," the governor stated. Armstrong said in the executive order was declared because of the "widespread damage to trees, homes, electrical infrastructure, vehicles and two train derailments" and added that numerous rural properties were damaged because of multiple tornadoes confirmed across the state. (<https://www.governor.nd.gov/...> and Executive Order 2025-05.pdf)

MPR reported some rail cars had been derailed southeast of Bemidji. "The sheriff's office said its initial investigation indicated the strong winds pushed rail cars parked in the BNSF yard in Cass Lake to the east, causing five cars to derail."

WHAT CAUSED THE HIGH WINDS?

"A line of thunderstorms developed in western North Dakota Friday evening, organizing around the Dickinson area. That storm quickly developed strong winds with multiple reports over 100 mph," explained DTN Ag Meteorologist John Baranick. "As the line reached the Jamestown area late in the evening, the line's thunderstorms quickly petered out, but a "wake low" -- a strong low-pressure center that can develop behind a line of thunderstorms -- continued to produce strong winds into the overnight hours."

He continued, "The storm is not likely to be classified as a derecho as it didn't travel long enough, though it was close (the continuous wind damage reports only extended about 200 miles). A derecho is defined by the National Weather Service as a long-duration windstorm due to thunderstorms that produces continuous severe wind gusts of at least 58 mph over a distance of at least 250 miles with multiple hurricane-force wind gusts of at least 75 mph along the path.

"But this was not all the severe weather that occurred that night. Ahead of the line of storms, supercell thunderstorms produced multiple tornadoes from the Jamestown area eastward toward Fargo that evening as well. The Storm Prediction Center currently counts 15 tornadoes as of 4 p.m. CDT Sunday, June 22, and will likely continue damage assessments this week to determine if there were more," Baranick said.

SURVEYING THE DAMAGE

The National Weather Office at Grand Forks, North Dakota, had teams on the weekend survey damage in Barnes County and Enderlin in North Dakota, as well as the Bemidji area of Minnesota.

As of Saturday afternoon, the NWS office said in its preliminary report there were the following tornadoes, on the Enhanced Fujita Scale, which has six levels based on wind speeds and aligned damage: at least an EF3 (winds 136-165 mph) west of Valley City, at least an EF2 (111-135 mph) south of Valley City, at least an EF3 in the Enderlin area, and was still investigating the Bemidji area. "It may take several days (or even weeks) before final ratings are determined, so please be patient," NWS in Grand Forks said on its Facebook page.

On Sunday, the NWS Bismarck office reported there was an EF1 (86-110 mph) tornado of peak winds 108 mph near Medina, North Dakota, that started after 10 p.m. and had a damage path that lasted 4 miles. "Trees snapped down to the trunk with leaves and branches blown off. Power towers bent and twisted. Roof damage to one farm building, with another farm building completely destroyed. Shingle, roof, garage and siding damage to homes. Debris scattered around property and up to a half mile away. Grain bins dented. Semi trailer tipped to the side," said the report.

One of the people commenting on the NWS Grand Folks FB site noted he had seen "farm sheds blown apart and grain bin sites collapsed or blown apart."

The National Weather Service at Bismarck, North Dakota, posted on its Facebook page and website some of the preliminary wind gusts and hail reports it got. These included wind gusts as high as 101 mph (Temvik) and a large number of other reports of winds more than 70 mph and into the high 90s. (See report at <https://forecast.weather.gov/...>)

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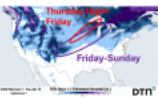
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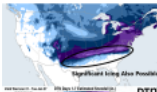
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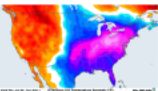
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