



Homes damaged in the wake of the EF-3 tornado that struck Little Rock, AR.

On the afternoon and evening of Friday, March 31, a deadly storm system tore through a wide swath of the central United States, bringing with it torrential rain, large hail and powerful tornadoes, leaving at least 32 people dead and injuring dozens.¹ The National Weather Service has confirmed that at least 81 tornadoes struck 14 states, ranging from Iowa to Delaware, and from Illinois to Mississippi.² Among the states most devastated by the storm system is Arkansas, where an EF-3 tornado tore through Little Rock, killing one person and damaging close to 2,600 buildings.³ About 100 miles to the east, a separate twister nearly razed the city of Wynne, killing four people and leveling entire blocks of buildings, including a high school.⁴ On the morning of April 2, President Biden approved a major disaster declaration for Arkansas, making federal funding available for Cross, Lonoke and Pulaski counties, which include Little Rock and Wynne.⁵

Fifteen storm-related deaths were recorded in Tennessee, where damage from a tornado rendered the city of Covington “impassable,” and officials from McNairy County reported that possible tornadoes and powerful winds caused damage to nearly 40% of the county, killing nine people.⁶ In the city of Belvidere, Illinois, the roof of a concert venue collapsed due to the severe weather during a show, leaving at least one person dead, five people in critical condition and dozens injured.⁷ In Indiana, an EF-3 tornado killed three people in Sullivan County, bringing the state’s death toll to five.⁸

The central US is under another threat of severe weather for the afternoon and evening of April 4, which will bring thunderstorms, large hail and tornadoes to a large section of the country extending from the Great Lakes region to eastern Texas, encompassing a population of 70 million.⁹ The National Weather Service’s Storm Prediction Center indicates that the regions of Arkansas that were ravaged by tornadoes less than a week ago are yet again under an enhanced or moderate risk of severe weather, and face the potential of “unusually strong tornadoes.” Larger population centers in that area are at risk of dangerous conditions include Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Little Rock, Madison, Springfield and St. Louis.¹⁰

International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps’ emergency response assessment team is on the ground in Little Rock and Wynne, and is coordinating with the local government and organizations to support response efforts. The team is currently working closely with ARcare, a federally qualified health center (FQHC) network with dozens of clinics across Arkansas, Kentucky and Mississippi, which has deployed a mobile medical unit (MMU) to Wynne and is providing healthcare to residents.

FAST FACTS

- On March 31, a violent storm system swept through the central US, bringing with it powerful tornadoes
- The National Weather Service has confirmed that at least 81 tornadoes struck 14 states
- 32 fatalities have been reported across seven states
- Severe weather is forecast for the central US on Tuesday, April 4, which will place affected states under the threat of thunderstorms, heavy rain, damaging winds and tornadoes

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/31/us/midwest-storms-flood-weather.html>

² <https://abcnews.go.com/US/tornadoes-numbers-dozens-reported-7-states/story?id=98290319>

³ <https://apnews.com/article/tornado-arkansas-storm-concert-79fe2da8a6b8bd92970032530b760d20>

⁴ <https://abcnews.go.com/US/tornadoes-numbers-dozens-reported-7-states/story?id=98290319>

⁵ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/04/02/president-joseph-r-biden-jr-approves-arkansas-disaster-declaration-2/>

⁶ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2023/04/02/tornadoes-storms-live-updates/11587581002/>

⁷ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2023/04/02/tornadoes-storms-live-updates/11587581002/>

⁸ <https://www.foxweather.com/weather-news/deadly-tornado-sullivan-indiana-update>

⁹ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/04/weather/us-severe-storms-tornado-threat-tuesday/index.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/products/outlook/day1otlk.html>

In response to tornado-related needs that ARcare has identified in Wynne, International Medical Corps is working to procure essential relief supplies for residents who have been displaced by the storms, including bedding, air mattresses, clean-up supplies and over-the-counter medications. We have also helped facilitate the donation of oxygen concentrators and tanks for ARcare's local clinics.

ARcare has identified disaster-related mental health concerns in affected communities, including heightened stress and anxiety among community members impacted by the tornadoes, and burnout among frontline health workers who are coping with storm-related stress and an increase in patient loads. International Medical Corps is assessing our ability to provide mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services as part of our response-and-recovery efforts, to meet the immediate and long-term mental health needs of local residents.

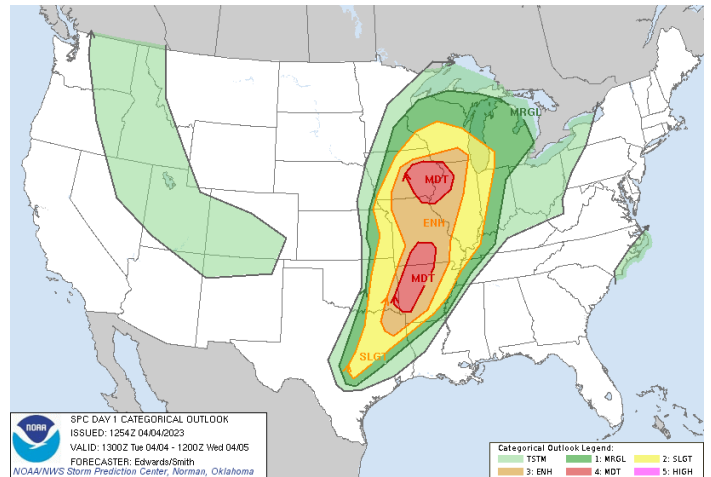
Finally, International Medical Corps is prepared to provide prepositioned supplies, including hygiene and wound-care kits, generators and other equipment and supplies, to ensure that local health facilities and organizations can keep their doors open and provide uninterrupted medical and social services to the community.

International Medical Corps in the Central US

When a series of severe tornadoes tore through the central United States in December 2021, marking the most devastating tornado event in Kentucky's history, International Medical Corps immediately deployed an emergency response team to devastated communities in the far western part of the state to assess the damage and assist with immediate disaster-related needs. We partnered with ARcare and its subsidiary KentuckyCare, a community-based health provider, to provide support that helped KentuckyCare keep the doors of its clinics open and continue to provide comprehensive primary care, urgent care, vaccination and mental health services to the tornado-impacted communities.

With the support of International Medical Corps, KentuckyCare was able to adequately staff its clinics and deliver a wide range of medical services to affected communities, purchase essential supplies and equipment (medical and non-medical) to ensure that clinics could remain operational and support preparedness efforts for future disasters and procure a wheelchair-accessible patient transportation van to transport patients living in more remote locations or that lacked access to reliable transportation to and from their appointments. Thanks to International Medical Corps' support throughout 2022, KentuckyCare has been able to increase its capacity to meet the continuing and evolving needs of patients affected by the storm.

International Medical Corps also has partnered with Winrock International to implement a new USDA-funded project focused on integrating emergency preparedness and health education into community-based economic development programming targeting top employers in two counties in Arkansas.



NOAA's National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center forecast for risk of severe weather on April 4. Source: <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/products/outlook/day1otlk.html>