

Hundreds Homeless in City Area Floods

By Katherine Hatch

More than 600 Oklahoma City residents were left homeless Friday after three hours of pounding rain sent creeks from their banks and flooded scores of residential neighborhoods.

Worst damage was caused by Lightning Creek, which surged out of its banks in the southwest portion of the city, sending residents to higher ground while water poured into their homes.

Flooding occurred in Midwest City, Del City and low places throughout the south half of the metropolitan area.

The Weather Bureau at Will Rogers World Airport

recorded 5.30 inches of rain after midnight, with 4.23 inches of that falling between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m.

At Tinker Air Force Base, 5.23 inches was measured with 3.92 inches falling during the same three-hour period Friday morning.

A Red Cross emergency shelter for flood victims was set up in Southwood Baptist Church, 911 SW 59.

Joe Nash, chairman of the Red Cross disaster committee, said more than 600 persons were forced to flee their homes because of rising waters.

"But as far as we know, no one was hurt," Nash said.

The rain caused a brief emergency at the Santa Fe

Station, 100 S Santa Fe, when water pouring into an excavation for the Myriad convention center threatened to undercut a portion of railroad siding.

Bain Fisher, a Santa Fe official, said the section of track was reinforced with sandbags.

Some 20 metropolitan bridges, streets and intersections were rendered impassable by the storm.

Leroy Hansen, Oklahoma City-County Civil Defense director, warned all persons to stay away from those locations.

Bridges were reported washed out on Soldier Creek at SE 15; S Santa Fe between 43 and 44; SW 22 west of Westwood Dr., and SW 104 west of MacArthur.

Midwest Blvd. was closed by high water between SE 50 and SE 63, but Hansen said street crews had not been able to determine whether a bridge in that area was damaged.

"They haven't been able to find the bridge, yet," he said.

The flooding will be more costly to the city, in terms of repair and reconstruction of streets and bridges, than was the tornado which ripped across northwest Oklahoma City one month ago Saturday, Hansen said.

Although there was no official estimate of the amount of flood damage, unofficial estimates placed it

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Across the big pond in the 400 block SW 52 everyone's neighbor was having the same problem — Lightning Creek pouring in through car doors, front doors, back doors and doors throughout the homes. (Aerial Staff Photo by [Name]) More Pictures on Page 24.

Six Tornadoes Seen in Clouds Near Shawnee

Area Pounded By High Wind, Rain and Hail

One Funnel Dips West of Okemah; Trees Uprooted

Thunderstorms loosed heavy rains and some hail over south-central and eastern Oklahoma Friday night. Six different funnels were spotted aloft near Shawnee.

Only one touched ground.

Smith Has Both Fire, Police Jobs

By Mike Brake

Oklahoma City Councilman John Smith would rather do it himself.

Smith, a resident of the city's flood-stricken southside, spent most of Friday morning helping firemen and volunteer rescue crews float families from their waterlogged homes.

"My neighbors," he described them.

He spent his lunch break routing two burglars from his home at 7001 S Indiana. Before he was through he chased a suspect into the path of a waiting police officer.