10 Take-Homes from 10 Tense Days of Tenacious Tornados in 10 Minutes

EMS State of the Science
A Gathering of Eagles XVI – Dallas, TX 2014

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1,100 square miles
Population 1.6M day/1.2M night
197,334 calls (2013)
144,496 transports (2013) 73%
3,700 professionals (700 Paramedics)
Public Utility Model Ambulance
Paramedic + EMT
Fire Dept Emerg. Medical Response
EMT Engines/Trucks
Paramedic Squads/Engines
If you ever wish for interesting times...

you might seriously rethink that wish.
A major flash flooding event is taking place in and around Oklahoma City and surrounding areas. Some areas may be approaching a foot of rain. This is a very dangerous situation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced Fujita Scale</th>
<th>Wind Speed (MPH)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EF-0</td>
<td>65-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-1</td>
<td>86-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-2</td>
<td>111-135</td>
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<tr>
<td>EF-3</td>
<td>136-165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-4</td>
<td>166-200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-5</td>
<td>over 200</td>
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</tbody>
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Take Home Point #1

Sometimes big is big
...and bad is bad
Take Home Point #2

In a massive tornado, there is no “take it all in” first before action.
El Reno Tornado - May 31, 2013

Tornado Begins at 6:03 pm CDT

Tornado Ends at 6:43 pm CDT

Location of Maximum Width and Intensity

Maximum EF Rating: EF-5
Maximum Path Width: 2.6 miles
Path Length: 16.2 miles
Take Home Point #3

Prior training is the only thing you’ll have in modifying initial operations basic instincts otherwise
Take Home Point #4

Fast is slow and slow is fast
Take Home Point #5

In a massive tornado, “success” is safety in operations
Roof off of a barn flying in the air.

Stormtrackers.net
Take Home Point #6

Remember what a smart public will do...if they can
Take Home Point #7

Anticipate all that you can, but still keep your options open
Preliminary Tornado Tracks for the May 31, 2013 El Reno and South OKC Tornadoes
Take Home Point #8

EMS is an important function ...among several important functions
Take Home Point #9

In a massive tornado, the “life saving” is just the start of operation overload.
Take Home Point #10

Keep the role of medical director (and other key leadership) in perspective ...ahead of events during events and after events
Subanalysis of Point #10

- As it turns out...
- 130 emails
- 42 text messages
- 10 voicemails

Mean something bad has happened.
Don’t forget

• Goodness that shines brightest in the dark
• Sense of mission circulated by EMS blood type
• Resourcefulness of EMS professionals
  — New and veteran
• Sometimes as humbling as it can be, the two best things a medical director can do:
  — Pray for the safety of personnel and the public
  — Stand behind the decisions made
Dedicated to the men and women in public service that responded capably, safely, and with humanity when good people needed their help in these dangerous days.
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