

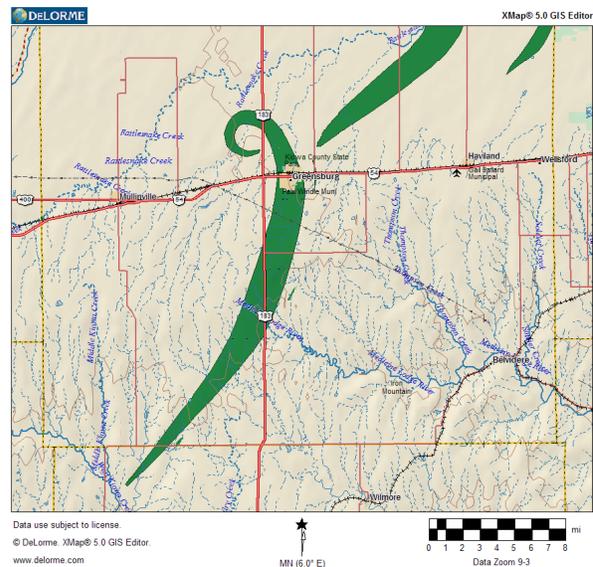
## First Ever EF5 Tornado Destroys A Small Kansas Town

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007, a monster tornado devastated the town of Greensburg Kansas and surrounding countryside. It was the strongest recorded tornado since the May 3, 1999 Moore Oklahoma twister. Despite a warning with 26 minutes of lead time, the town of around 1500 persons still lost 11 lives. Many of those died in basements. There were also 63 injuries reported. First responders arriving on the scene requested three refrigerated refer trucks thinking there would be hundreds of fatalities. Fate no doubt played a role in the relatively low loss of life given the situation.

The killer tornado started in a neighboring county to the south and crossed into Kiowa County shortly after 9 PM CST. It curved north then northwest before making a complete loop northwest of Greensburg, travelling nearly 26 miles and was on the ground for a little over 1 hour.

As the tornado was in a stage of dissipating it turned northwest, west, south and then back east making a loop. This was documented on both high resolution Doppler radar and through the ground survey. Also as the tornado was dissipating a new circulation quickly grew northeast of town.

Ninety percent of the town was destroyed or heavily damaged. In Greensburg alone, 961 homes and businesses were destroyed and 216 received major damage. The tornado also destroyed a dozen homes and a church south of Greensburg but did not cause injury there. Remarkably, the tornado took down the town's only water tower...which also stood above the infamous "hand dug well" and meteorite. Outside of town, several oil storage tanks were destroyed causing an environmental concern.





In the town of Greensburg, hazardous material was strewn everywhere. Even fire hydrants were displaced from their original location. As of July 26th, the debris was still not fully cleaned up. Two landfills were filled with debris from the town even though most of the debris was burned. Hundreds of thousands of dump truck loads were taken out. It was estimated that approximately 400,000 cubic yards of debris was removed.



The major highway running through town was closed for 1 full month. At one time there was over 150 law enforcement officers (from all over the country) present. Military was called in for debris removal and rebuilding.