NWS rates Taylorville tornado at EF-3, 22 injured, dozens of homes destroyed

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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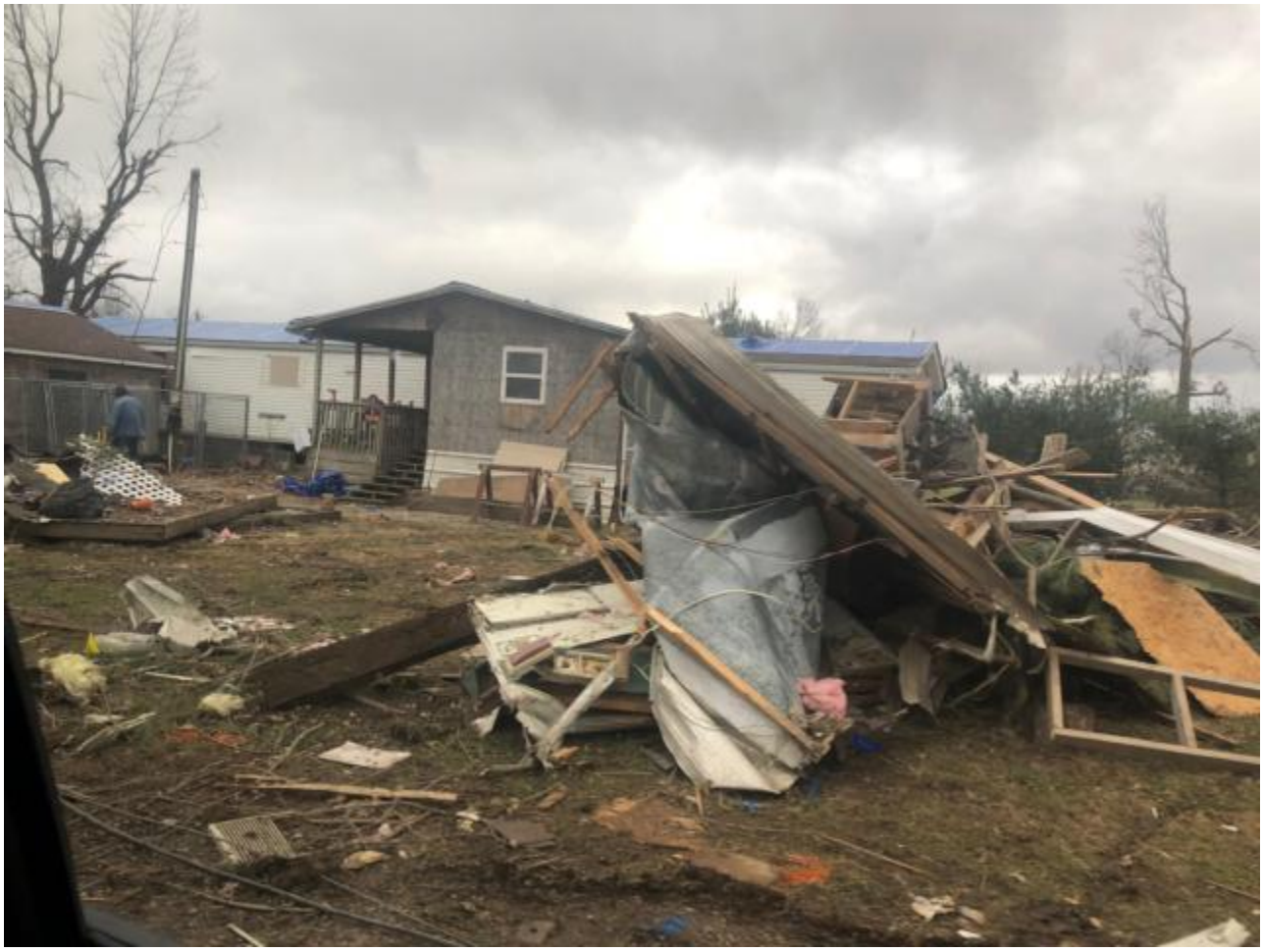


109-PICTURE PHOTO GALLERY BY CHRIS RHODES:

TAYLORVILLE – The National Weather Service (NWS) office in Lincoln, Illinois, has released the Enhanced Fujita (EF) rating for the tornado, which ripped through Taylorville on Saturday, Dec. 1.

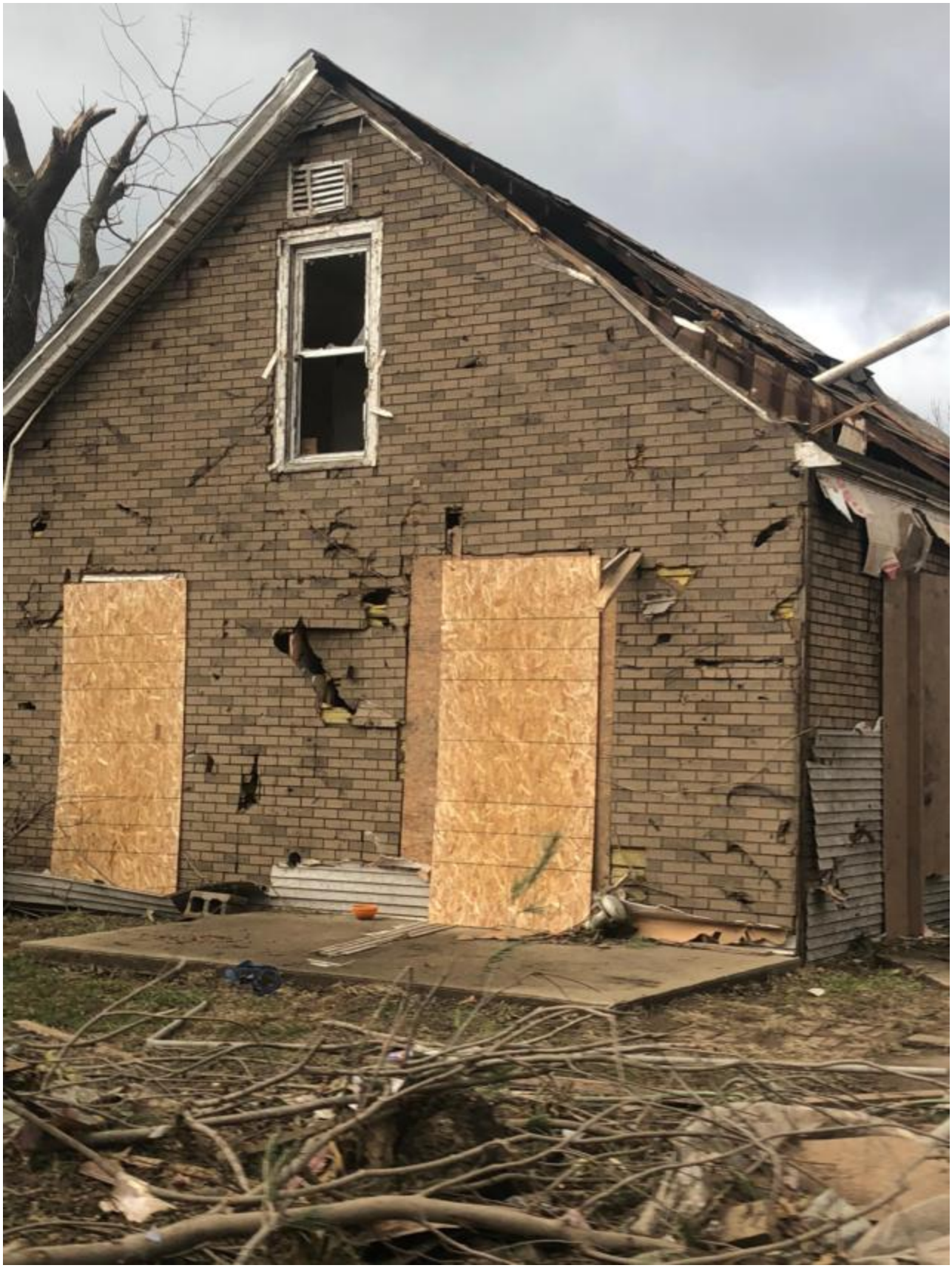
The tornado touchdown in Taylorville was once of 23 confirmed tornadoes to have ripped through the state during what is now believed to be the worst December tornado outbreak in Illinois history, replacing an epic outbreak of 21 tornadoes in 1957. Most of

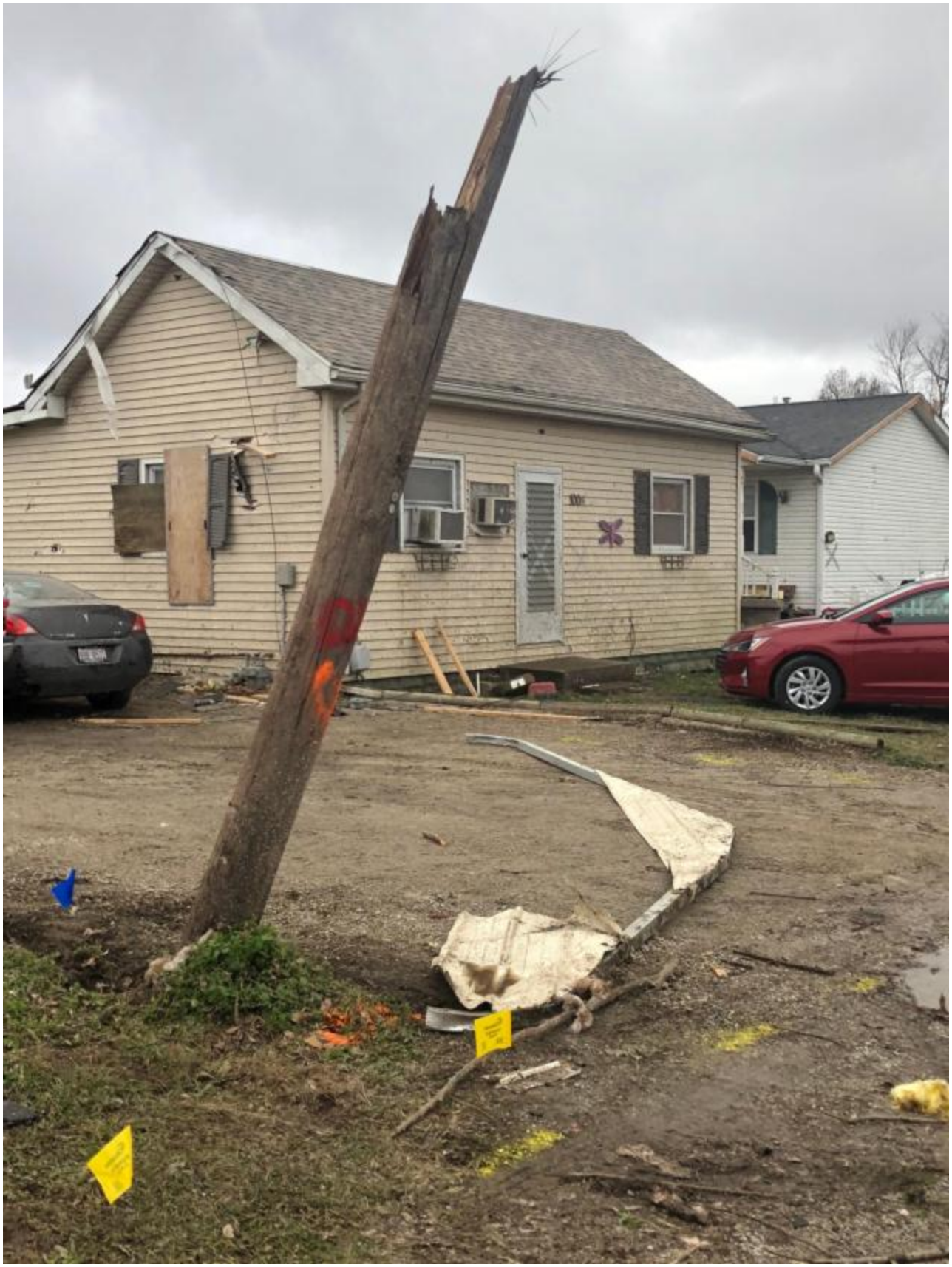
the other tornadoes were rated EF-0 or EF-1, meaning they had winds between 65-110 mph. A few were EF-2, meaning they had winds between 111-135 mph. After an investigation into the Taylorville event, however, it was determined that tornado was rated EF-3 with winds as high as 155 mph.

In its wake, 34 homes were severely damaged or destroyed, 66 homes had major damage and 406 homes were damaged, but inhabitable. The tornado was believed to be a half of a mile in diameter and traveled as far as 12.7 miles. As many as 22 people were injured in the storm, but no deaths were reported.

Other tornadoes spawned throughout Central Illinois, including one in Staunton and another in Litchfield. Others spawned in Beardstown, Bluffs, and Pleasant Hill.

Taylorville Mayor Bruce Barry said right now the residents and the city is in need of monetary donations to help with the rebuilding and massive cleanup. The mayor said any contributions can be mailed to the City of Taylorville, 115 N. Main St., Taylorville, IL., 62568. He encouraged Riverbender.com/Edglentoday.com to contact back in two weeks to see what specific needs at that point they would request. He said volunteers are needed to help with cleanup. Barry said the best time to come would be the weekend of Dec. 15-16 for cleanup as things are still being assessed.





Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.