



Fern Brown (left), 2709 Ave. D, talks with Jean Goetsche (right), 2708 Ave. D, about damage done to several trees in their yards. Trees from the Goetsche residence blew onto the Brown property.—Photo by Dan Koenig.



Ben Anson, 1321 N. 22nd St., leans against the stump of a 15-year-old maple tree during a break in cleaning up his yard. "We're sure going to miss that tree," Anson said. Anson said he watched a tornado roar up North 22nd Street before seeking shelter in his bathtub. His house does not have a basement. — Photo by Joe Arterburn.



Don Bart, 1324 N. 22nd St., had his yard raked clean by Monday afternoon, three days after the storm, but the street in front of his home remained blocked by piles of downed trees and limbs. By Monday evening, a crew from the Omaha Sewer Division had cleared the street and moved on to another. — Photo by Joe Arterburn.

The storm was "immature," he said. If it had formed farther to the southwest, it probably would have had time to develop into a "mature" storm with only one funnel cloud, he said. With only one tornado, the damage would have been much more severe but not as widespread, Hansen said.

Chances are it would have been easier to detect, as well. The tornadoes that hit here were not picked up by weather service radar or by spotters in time for much warning, he said.

"We saw the black cloud and the rain — there could have easily been no tornadoes in there," Hansen said.

A mature storm might have

allowed more warning time. As it was, civil defense sirens were sounded only one minute before the reported touchdown.

Benny Gullach, deputy chief of the National Weather Service's Omaha bureau, said the initial blow to Council Bluffs, which caused much of the city's tree damage, may have been from downbursts — downward moving wind gusts averaging up to 100 mph.

Following right behind the downbursts were a number of small tornadoes, he said.

"Small (tornadoes) just go hop, skip and jump, hitting here, missing there," resulting in the type of damage seen in Council Bluffs, Gullach said.