

Fairfield Twister Kills 6

By JOHN COLLINS
Newberry Bureau

WINNSBORO

At least six people were killed near Winnsboro on Wednesday as a tornado hit several communities in Fairfield County, trapping residents in their homes, overturning vehicles and damaging buildings.

A state of emergency was declared, and the S.C. National Guard was called out, civil defense officials said.

The brunt of the storm fell on a stretch of rundown houses and trailer homes about a mile north of Winnsboro.

City Manager L.C. Greene said some of the victims were occupants of "small, tenant-type houses" that "just collapsed."

Coroner Joe Silvia said the dead included Maude Bell, about 60, and her grandson, L.A. McLean, about 4; Edward Craig, 58 to 60; Jeffrey Woodard, 11; and two unidentified males.

Mrs. Bell and her grandson died when the twister struck her house trailer on S.C. 222 in the Smalltown community north of Winnsboro.

Craig's body was found in his trailer behind a nightclub in the same area.

The details of Woodard's death are uncertain, Silvia said. The victim lived on Secondary Road 20-61.

Silvia said the unidentified males included a Maryland truck driver who died when his rig slammed into an embankment on Interstate 77 after he lifted the truck off a bridge spanning a culvert.

Vickie McDonald of the county Civil Defense office said a tornado touched down near the county detention center on the outskirts of Winnsboro about 6 p.m.



Winnsboro

(Continued from 1-A)

Those left homeless today sought refuge at Nazarene Church, while power crews worked to restore electricity to the hardest hit areas. Teams of rescue workers continued to search the debris for more victims today, but were hampered by blocked secondary roads north of the town. Helicopters were also being used in the search.

A platoon of about 30 National Guardsmen today stood watch over damaged stores and businesses to prevent looting, while agents from the State Law Enforcement Division assisted local police and sheriff's deputies in restoring order.

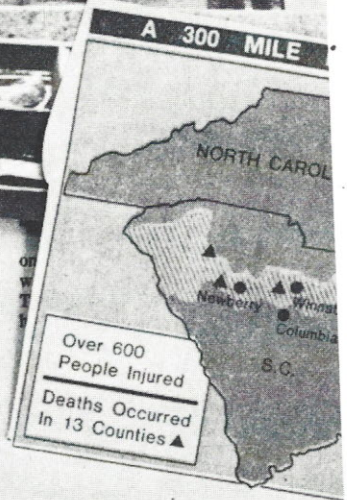
"Some areas are just torn up," said Capt. Earl Wilkes of the Fairfield County Sheriff's Department.

E.L. Ayers, general manager of Fairfield Electric Cooperative said today that about 3,000 to 4,000 customers remained without power this morning, all located in areas north and east of Winnsboro. He said at least nine heavy power lines operated by Santee-Cooper were down and would probably be late tonight sometime tomorrow before electricity could be restored to affected areas.

Wilkes said about 27 prisoners transferred about 5 p.m. to Chester County when power failed at Fairfield County's Detention Center would remain there for the next several days.

The storm struck about 5:30 p.m. yesterday, just after most residents had arrived home from work.

"No time to react," said



Howling 'freight' hurls through W

By Scott Johnson
Staff writer

WINNSBORO — Standing in the rubble that a day ago was Richard Wynne Academy, John McNeely described just how lucky he was.

The 18-year-old Erskine College student and a friend, 16-year-old Robert Stidham, last night had huddled in fear alongside the private school and watched as a tornado ripped off its roof and hurled school buses 50 feet.

"I was frightened," he said. Black stuff was in the air.

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