

# Tornado rips through Ramer, Caudill

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Editors

The tornado that swept across Vol State at approximately 2:22 p.m. on April 7 has left behind a wake of chaos and destruction, with damage to nearly every building on campus. A conservative estimation of the damage has been quoted at \$6 million, although that number is expected to rise.

"My first thoughts were for people's safety," said Vol State President Dr. Warren Nichols. Only minor injuries were reported around campus immediately following the storm.

The Caudill Hall and Ramer Administration buildings both received significant structural damage, including damage to the roof and water infiltration. Caudill Hall will not be operational for the rest of the semester and the 2007 academic year, due to a collapsed roof, which has made the building unsafe. Faculty was permitted to re-enter their offices in Caudill Hall early last week to retrieve personal items, but some equipment will have to stay.

"A lot of the radio equipment in radio production we can't remove because there's a distinct

possibility that the roof might cave in," explained Nichols.

As clean up began the very next morning, damage assessment revealed that 11 classrooms and 72 faculty and staff offices were affected by the storm. Several faculty members agreed that student records seemed to be intact, with companies working to remove as much data as possible from destroyed hard drives.

Dr. Carol Topping, director of the honors program, had already made some decisions Tuesday morning about what she would have done if her office- and student grades- had been destroyed.

"If I had lost all [the records] I just figured I'd give them all A's, I figured that'd be the only fair thing to do," said Topping. "Unfortunately I found my stuff."

Nichols remains optimistic about the future of the campus. "Preliminary estimates are that Caudill will be rebuilt. There is structural damage, for sure. But they're telling me that we will

no problems," according to a report released by the school Friday.

Holly brown, a student who was in Caudill Hall during the tornado, compared the experience to the Wizard of Oz, saying that the room she was in was the same but everywhere outside there was destruction.

"It sounded like it was a giant that was picking up itty bitty things and snapping them in half," said Jonathon Corbitt, who was on Gallatin Road when the tornado hit.

In addition to the damage suffered to the Ramer and Caudill Hall buildings, the library suffered significant roof damage and six other buildings suffered minor structural and interior damage.

Along with its destructive course through the Vol State campus, the tornado ripped through Sumner County toppling over 1,040 buildings, over 800 of which were homes and causing over \$68 million in damage.

Campus security reported thefts early in the week, alerting faculty and staff to secure their belongings.



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