

Freak twister rips through Georgetown

A freak twister ripped through a section of Georgetown Saturday afternoon at 3.30, leaving uprooted trees, smashed windows, toppled garages and sheds, and hundreds of bent and downed television antennae in its wake.

Haltom police estimate damage between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

The tornado, with winds between gale force and hurricane, cut a swath roughly from Ann and Ontario Street, to Ewing Street, along Elizabeth Street and Hewson Crescent, across the railroad tracks to the Dayfoot Drive area, hit Chapel Street school, careened across Guelph Street near the fire hall, down Main Street, to the Market, Edith Street and park area, and lifted up near North Haltom Golf Club.

The storm occurred right at a shift change for police, so extra men were sent to Georgetown from Acton and Milton detachments without draining staff there.

Cons. Michalski and Cons. Vanelief from the Acton detachment assisted in Georgetown till about 7.30 p.m.

Acton hydro employees also went to Georgetown to assist. In their concern to make the ground safe, they tied up some wires with ropes until further repairs could be undertaken, they said.

One Acton family was awakened at midnight Saturday by anxious relatives who had heard the bad storm was at Acton. They wanted to know if the people here were all right. They were all right and didn't even know there had been a storm at Georgetown.

Another Actonian blamed the whole thing on regional government. "Georgetown gets everything," complained the wag.

Hydro wires came tumbling down in the Elizabeth Drive-Hewson Crescent area when the twister struck and as it moved along it knocked out windows at Chapel Street School. More hydro wires and cable television wires came tumbling down when a tree behind the school was uprooted in the vicinity of Ryan Road and Morris Street.

Another falling tree pulled down hydro wires with it in the Guelph Street-Ryan Road area and a large tree on Main Street pulled down more power lines.

The tree, located in front of the Bell Canada parking lot blocked Main Street for almost three hours and traffic was diverted away from the area by police. Police kept a watchful eye on the many wide-eyed pedestrians who milled about the area to make sure no one went near live hydro lines sprawled around the large tree.

Much of the damage which resulted from the sudden tornado was especially visible on Main Street where the winds lifted a car into the air and then deposited it on the back of another car, smashed store windows and signs and left the street riddled with glass, tree limbs, refuse and leaves.

Colin Gibson, 51 Main Street, was treated for lacerations on his right arm and later released from hospital after the small sports car he was sitting in, parked on the median strip on Main Street, was lifted five feet, twirled around in the air, and then dumped on another car parked on the west side of the street. Sue Frawley, Gibson's fiancée, was also in the small car but escaped unhurt.

The car ended up on the rear of an unoccupied parked car belonging to William Kavanagh, 77 Guelph Street. Police estimated there was

\$500 damage to the Gibson car, which sustained damage to the entire front end. There was \$300 damage to the other parked car to the trunk and rear bumper.

The whirling winds damaged the roofs at MacKenzie Lumber, James Street, the Haltom Hills municipal office and the by-beltianne shop.

Windows were smashed at Barber-Henley Travel, Confi Furniture, Golden Fish and Chips, Towne Sewing Centre, Canada Trust and the law offices of Richard Howitt and Peter Heslin.

When the Canada Trust windows were shattered the

bank alarm went off and the winds caused substantial damage in Confi Furniture when both the front and rear doors were blown open. Part of the tiled ceiling was torn down and the rest warped and furniture and lamps were knocked over by the twister.

Not long after the twister had finished, Haltom Hills works crews were on the scene cleaning up the glass which was scattered over Main Street and merchants busied themselves boarding up broken windows and doors.

Since the boarding up of windows and doors was only a temporary measure police detailed an officer to keep an eye on the area and police are still paying special attention to the commercial areas affected by the storm.

The large blue and white illuminated overhanging sign at Wigo TV was smashed by the high winds and pieces of it scattered about on Main Street and found as far away as Mill and Edith Streets.

There was also some minor damage to Union Gas and a sign at Goodlets store.

The twister swept up Wesleyan and Mill Streets, startling Independent reporter Gord Murray, who was at the newspaper office, when the rear window of the office came crashing down.

Murray raced to the front door with camera in hand and struggled to get the front door

open so he could get out to take some photos of the chaos on Mill Street as branches, tree limbs, car hub caps, heating ducts and clouds of dirt roared up the street.

Once outside the Independent, the photographer, braced himself against a car and tried to squeeze off a few shots but was repeatedly tossed back against the wall of the office.



DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN was chaotic as police tried to control car and pedestrian traffic following the twister which hit the town, Saturday, around 3.30 p.m.



TRAFFIC WAS BLOCKED on Main Street, Georgetown, Saturday afternoon after this tree came crashing down during the twister which tore through downtown Georgetown. It dragged down hydro wires with it.



WHAT MILL Street, Georgetown, looked like just seconds after a twister tore its way down the street.



THIS TREE pulled out of the ground by Saturday's twister leans against the front porch of Enrico Caruso's house, 6 Guelph St.

Lumber yard planned on No. 7

A lumber yard known as Lumberland Retail Outlet could locate on 24 acres of land on Highway 7, next to the wrecking yard, north of the Limehouse road, if all approvals can be obtained.

Solicitor Walter Sopinka told Haltom Hills planning board, Tuesday night, Guy and Tony Cavallo planned to erect a 20,000 square foot commercial building, with all indoor storage.

He described the existing stretch of highway as "planner's nightmare", with three residences, a car dealership, a farm machinery dealership, a gas station, and a wrecking yard.

He claimed this proposal would upgrade rather than detract from the area, and said it was a consistent use, with valuable assessment for the town.

He said he understood there had been an objection raised because of increased traffic in the area, but discounted it

since Highway 7 already carries heavy traffic.

The lawyer said parking would be no problem since there was lots of space in the 24 acres. He said the land is within the Niagara Escarpment Development area, and must be approved by them, after the town makes a recommendation.

Councillor Russell Miller questioned the statement that all storage would be indoors. He said frequently businesses start out that way and end up with storage all over the place. He said nobody seems

to enforce by-laws and agreements.

Planner Mario Venditti said under the development control of the Niagara Escarpment even tree planting is controlled. He said the insistence on indoor storage would be written into any agreement.

After a slide presentation showing the location of the building and a long curving driveway leading to it, planning board approved the proposal in principle and asked for a report from the planner.

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