

- SAM CHOO:** Dozens of damaged and uprooted trees filled the air with the scent of pine as residents of Andover surveyed the damage caused by Wednesday night's storms. Streets were filled with debris, including tree limbs, siding, and a backyard swing set. People could even see right into some homes that were torn apart by the wind.
- Margaret Lanta describes what happened when the storm hit her home in southeastern Andover.
- MARGARET LANTA:** Well, it just got really dark, and a little bit after 7 o'clock, the rain started coming. And I saw on the TV that it was read in the Andover area, so we ran down our basement. And we could hear the rain, the wind, the hail.
- And I don't know what time it was, probably 7:20, 7:30. All of a sudden our whole house shook, and that was it. And I knew it was bad. And the power was out at that time.
- And we just looked in our backyard and saw our fence was gone. And then we looked at our neighbor's house. I saw that their house was gone. And then we looked to the other side of us, and I saw that house was gone, too.
- I noticed we had broken windows in our house. And I opened our door that leads into our garage, and I noticed our garage was gone.
- SAM CHOO:** About a half mile away, with his family safe in the basement, Bob Hickey watched the storm from his kitchen window.
- BOB HICKEY:** The trees in our front yard-- we've got that little three-tree growth, and they were just whirling around like helicopter blades. And I saw the hail hitting the window. And then I was putting my hand to the window, and the window actually got pushed towards me. And that's when I said, I gotta get downstairs.
- So I started heading down. But then our door, which was deadbolted, flew open. So the door bowed in enough to pull the deadbolt out. So then I tried to get that closed to keep the water from coming in the house. But then I went downstairs, and then two minutes later, it was gone. It was just raining again.
- SAM CHOO:** Darryl [? Dalen ?] lives on Palm Street. While his property sustained only minimal damage, his neighbor's garage was completely destroyed.
- DARRYL DALEN:** It's kind of strange when you look at it. Some houses didn't get very much damage. Other one's got quite a bit damaged, almost like it picked and choose, but obviously it doesn't. But it's the luck of the draw, as they say. I got lucky. Other ones didn't get nearly as lucky.
- SAM CHOO:** Communities across the Twin Cities were also affected by the storm. At one point, more than 160,000 homes were without power. Xcel Energy spokesman Ed Legge says this is the most damage a storm has caused in the Twin Cities in the last five years.
- EDD LEGGE:** This is kind of the worst-case scenario for an electrical system that's above the ground, because you not only have the electrical storm that's going to affect it, of course, but really strong winds just wreaks havoc. Because leaves are still on trees and trees are hitting power lines. And lines are going down, and poles are breaking.
- And it's pretty much just like everything else. It takes a hit.

**SAM CHOO:** Andover officials estimate that the cost of damage to the town could exceed \$1 million, and Mayor Steve Larson has declared a state of emergency. Reporting from Andover, I'm Sam Choo, Minnesota Public Radio News.