

**LIGHTNING DAMAGES HOME IN ST. PETERS**



LARRY WILLIAMS / POST-DISPATCH

Firefighters from the Central County Fire Protection District put out hot spots in a house fire started by a lightning strike Tuesday evening on Autumn Leaf Drive in St. Peters. No one was injured.

**Storms knock out power over wide areas**

**Electricity to many may not be restored until late today or Thursday**

BY GREG JONSSON AND DAVID BRACKEN  
*Of the Post-Dispatch*

Powerful thunderstorms rolled through the region Tuesday evening, shaking cars with strong winds, knocking down tree limbs and cutting power to many before moving

quickly to the east.

The fast-moving storms entered the area about 5 p.m. and threw lightning and sheets of rain at much of the area. By 6:15, the worst of the weather had crossed the Mississippi River, and it had left the Metro East area after 7 p.m.

No serious injuries were reported, but the storms left at least 114,000 homes and businesses in Missouri and Illinois without power Tuesday night, according to Sue Bell, a spokeswoman for AmerenUE. Company officials estimate many of those people may not have power back until late today or Thursday.

"It's a massive storm for us," Bell said.

She said the company had called in extra crews from throughout the bistate area to assist in getting power back for customers.

More storms were expected overnight, and the National Weather Service was warning that some flooding was possible.

The evening storms slowed rush-hour traffic, providing a bookend of storms for commuters who had faced similar conditions Tuesday morning.

Much of the area received an inch or two of rain in just a few hours Tuesday evening, and

small hail was seen in some places, according to the National Weather Service. Winds from the storm downed trees throughout the region and peeled the roofs off buildings in some places.

In St. Louis County, trees were knocked over in Ellisville, Manchester, North County and Richmond Heights, according to the National Weather Service. Powerless traffic lights and pools of water slowed traffic to a crawl in many parts of the county.

MetroLink trains were briefly stalled without power near downtown.

*See Storms, C3*

SLPD, June 11, 2003 C1

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Fri, May 5, 2017

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH METRO WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2003

## Storms

### Some may not see power restored until Thursday

*Continued from C1*

Stunned downtown workers emerged from their offices to find that St. Louis had temporarily become the set of a science fiction movie. The sky took on an eerie bluish-green color, and sporadic blasts of thunder and crackles of lightning made it appear as though a flickering lamp was hovering over the city.

Umbrella-carrying commuters could do little to stay dry as wind gusts drove a hard rain into their faces while they scrambled to reach their cars. Others stood in the lobby of their buildings with mouths agape, preferring to wait out the storm as spectators to the display.

In Jefferson County, a large tree crashed into a house on Apple Hollow Drive in Arnold as strong wind, pounding rain and lightning pushed through the area starting about 5:45 p.m.

Numerous utility lines and trees also were reported downed in Arnold, Imperial, Pevely, High Ridge, House Springs and Hillsboro.

The Shady Valley Fire Department rescued a person caught in Rock Creek off Treebrook Drive north of Highway 21 in central Jefferson County without injury. No other injuries were immediately reported.

As the storm moved through St. Charles County about 5 p.m., it toppled trees and telephone wires and produced plenty of lightning and thunder. At least one house and a condominium were reported to have had trees hit their roofs, and firefighters were working three fires early Tuesday evening. At least one, in St. Peters, was caused by lightning.

"I haven't seen a rain like that for 15 years," said Sgt. Donovan Kenton of the St. Charles Police Department.

The county received so many moderate-damage reports to its 911 call center that it requested help for nonemergency calls, said Chris Blackwell of the St. Charles City Fire Department. The minor calls included water in homes, lightning strikes that didn't start fires and minor building damage.



**ROBERT COHEN / POST-DISPATCH**

**Lightning illuminates downtown and the Gateway Arch Tuesday evening. The view is from Eads Bridge at the LaCledde's Landing MetroLink stop.**



**J.B. FORBES / POST-DISPATCH**

**Powerful wind Tuesday evening blew off long metal panels from the roof of the Stratford Inn in Fenton, leaving debris spread out over 200 yards along the south frontage road of Interstate 44. Guests had to evacuate the hotel after it lost power.**

Straight-line winds were responsible for the more severe damage in the area, according to Vince Acquaviva, a forecaster with the National Weather Service in Weldon Spring. The storm did not appear to spawn any tornadoes, he said, though a tornado warning was issued for parts of the Metro East area.

Storms similar to those that rolled through the St. Louis area Tuesday are likely to recur for the rest of the week.

A low-pressure system parked over the Midwest probably is not going to budge before week's end, said Jim Sieveking, another meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

*Shane Anthony and Tim Rowden of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.*

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