

# Missouri tornado now nation's single deadliest since 1950

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

Published: May 24, 2011

**JOPLIN, Mo. —** The death toll from a Missouri tornado now stands at 142 making it the single deadliest tornado in the U.S. since at least 1950.

Until this week, the single deadliest tornado on record with the National Weather Service in the past six decades was a twister that killed 116 people in Flint, Michigan, in 1953.

More deaths have resulted from outbreaks of multiple tornadoes. In April, a pack of twisters roared across six Southern states, killing more than 300 people, more than two-thirds of them in Alabama.

April 27 was the single deadliest day for tornadoes since 1947.

## **NWS Summary**

Severe storms producing tornadoes affected Southwest Missouri (NWS Springfield County Warning Area) during the afternoon and evening of May 22, 2011. Large portions of Joplin Missouri were severely damaged. Results of damage assessed thus far yielded a preliminary rating of high-end EF5 (+ 200 mph).

The Joplin tornado is the deadliest since modern recordkeeping began in 1950 and is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among the deadliest tornadoes in U.S. history.

The tornado surpassed the June 8, 1953, tornado that claimed 116 lives in Flint, Mich., as the deadliest single tornado to strike the U.S. since modern tornado record keeping began in 1950.

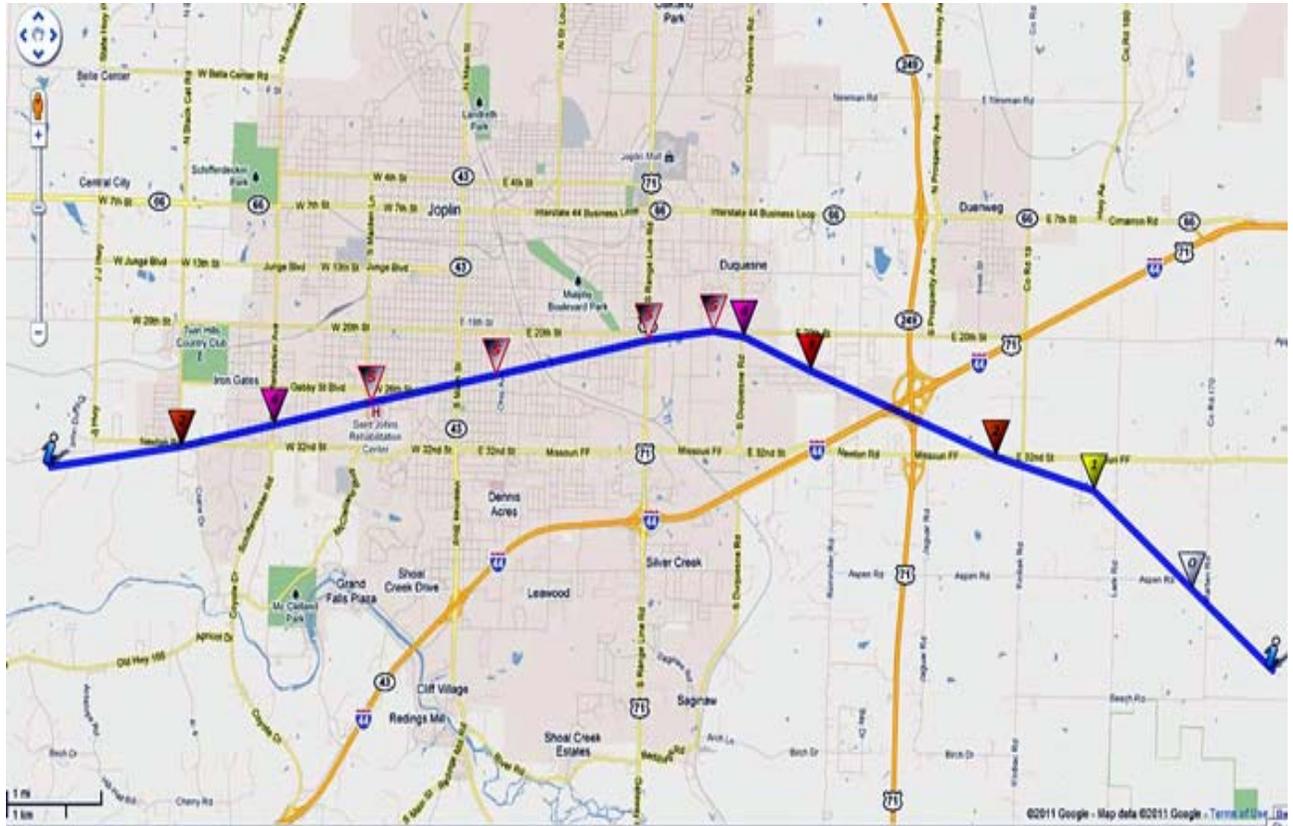
The deadliest tornado on record in the U.S. was on March 18, 1925.

The “Tri-State Tornado” (MO, IL, IN) had a 291-mile path, was rated F5 based on a historic assessment, and caused 695 fatalities.

### **Warning Information:**

The National Weather Service issued a Tornado Warning at 5:17 pm CDT, 5/22 which included the city of Joplin. The tornado was reported to have developed directly over Joplin with the first report of the tornado in Joplin at 5:41 pm CDT, 5/22. Lead time = 24 minutes.

**Joplin Tornado Survey --** Of course we know that EF5 tornadoes are extremely rare but look at a screen shot I took from the tornado track. Sadly this tornado seemed to have a mind of its own as a killer, sharply intensifying directly over the population center and then dissipating rather rapidly after crossing Joplin. The public is likely to think the high death toll due to global warming, but at least in the case of Joplin it looks like it was just by random chance than an EF5 hit such a populated area- a few miles east or west and only farmland would have been affected.



<b>Maximum EF-Scale</b>	5
<b>Estimated Maximum Wind</b>	+ 200 mph
<b>Path Length</b>	??
<b>Path Width</b>	3/4 Mile
<b>Fatalities</b>	142
<b>Injuries</b>	750

### Joplin Missouri EF-5 Tornado - May 22, 2011

A large portion of Joplin Missouri was devastated by an EF-5 (greater than 200 mph) tornado. Latest reports from Saturday 5/28 indicate an estimated 142 fatalities and over 750 injured in the Joplin MO area. The Joplin tornado is the deadliest since modern recordkeeping began in 1950 and is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among the deadliest tornadoes in U.S. history.

[NOAA High Resolution Satellite Imagery of Joplin Tornado Damage](#)

The tornado surpassed the June 8, 1953, tornado that claimed 116 lives in Flint, Mich., as the deadliest single tornado to strike the U.S. since modern tornado recordkeeping began in 1950. The deadliest tornado on record in the U.S. was on March 18, 1925. The "Tri-State Tornado" (MO, IL, IN) had a 291-mile path, was rated F5 based on a historic assessment, and caused 695 fatalities.

The US tornado death toll through the month of May this year is the highest since modern record keeping began in 1950. Also, 2011 is already ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among the deadliest tornado years in U.S. history. More information on 2011 Tornado statistics can be found at the following web site:  
[http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/2011\\_tornado\\_information.html](http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/2011_tornado_information.html)

---

#### Warning Information:

The National Weather Service issued a Tornado Warning at 5:17 pm CDT, 5/22 which included the city of Joplin. The tornado was reported to have developed directly over Joplin with the first report of the tornado in Joplin at 5:41 pm CDT, 5/22. Lead time = 24 minutes.

---

#### Additional Tornado Tracks Surveyed:

[Wentworth area - EF-2](#)

[Galena area in Stone County into northwest Taney County Missouri - EF-2](#)

[Southwest City in western McDonald County - EF-3](#)

[Event Tornado Track KML file to view in virtual globes such as Google Earth or Virtual Globe.](#)