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Adventist Review news roundup
Members and employees of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the southern United States were not spared suffering during a day and night of violent tornadoes that swept through six states April 27. The North American Division reported late in the evening on April 30 that two church members in northeastern Alabama and one in Apison, Tennessee are confirmed as fatalities; overall, at least 349 people have been reported as killed in the region, 250 of these in Alabama alone, according to the latest media reports.

"Two members of the Ownbey Chapel Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is located in Ider, Alabama, [approximately 33 miles southeast of Chattanooga] and one member of the Apison Seventh-day Adventist Church in southeastern Tennessee were killed during Wednesday’s tornadic outbreak," a North American Division statement indicated.

Also, one Seventh-day Adventist Church member in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was hospitalized following the tornado’s devastation in that city. At least six members of the South Central Conference lost their homes in Tuscaloosa; several more members' homes have been reported damaged there. The tornado which swept from Tuscaloosa to Birmingham had an 80-mile track, winds as high as 165 miles-per-hour and was designated an EF-4, the second-highest rating, a report at the Huntsville Times Website indicated.

Church officials in the affected area are working with local and state emergency officials to assess the situation in their local communities and determining where our assistance will be most needed, but are experiencing difficulties caused by numerous downed trees blocking roads, limited electricity, and unreliable phone service.

A tornado destroyed the Piedmont, Alabama, Seventh-day Adventist Church, 29 miles east of Gadsden, Alabama, the North American Division said. No injuries were reported, however.

In Huntsville, Alabama, church-owned Oakwood University lost electricity, along with much of the northern Alabama city, and ended its semester early. Final exams were canceled and the 2011 graduation is postponed until the end of May, school officials said. Several members' homes in the Huntsville area have been damaged or destroyed, reports indicate.

The Anderson Hills neighborhood home of Dr. Leslie Pollard, Oakwood's...