

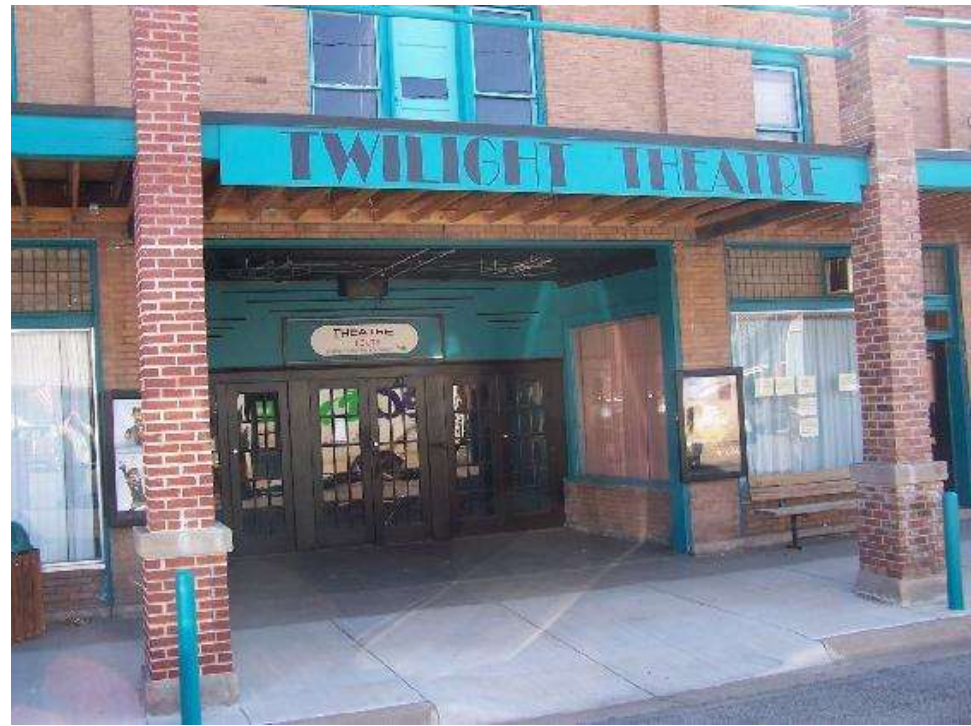
# “THE TORNADO” Lessons Learned in Greensburg

May 4, 2007  
Our “Perfect Storm”

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Greensburg was a quiet, Mid-western town, with approximately 1200 people. It was the county seat, with 11 churches, a 25 bed hospital, schools, downtown businesses. It had been my home for 29 years.

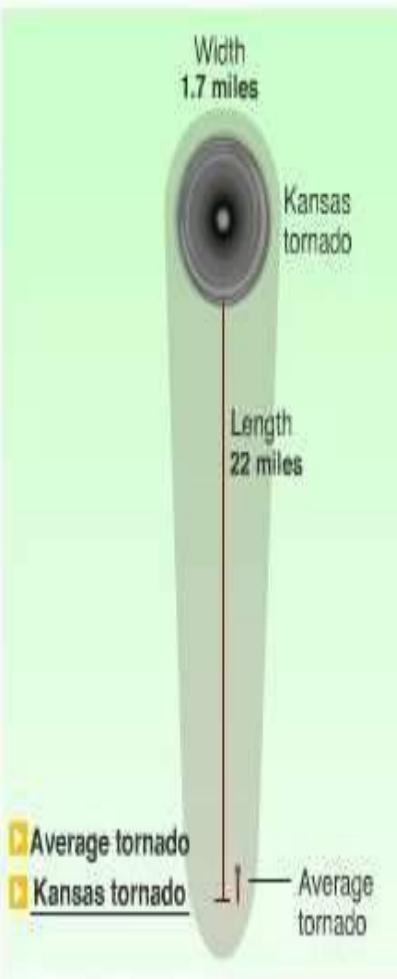
- May 4, 2007: 9:45 PM local time

Killed 13 people

95% of the town of 1200 people was damaged or destroyed, including all churches, schools and downtown businesses.

The tornado was given an EF5 rating.

It was on the ground for 22 miles and had a width of 1 to 1.7 miles



Source: The Weather Channel











# Our world changed forever

- All local governmental entities impacted:  
Courthouse, sheriff's office, fire department, City  
and County Offices all destroyed
- Most homes within the city limits - destroyed
- People missing for 48 hours



Emergency Services  
were out of operation









# Private homes destroyed



Anyone want to play "Pick-up-sticks"?







Dillon's Grocery Store  
(Only full-service grocery store in  
county - triage center after tornado)

Fleener's Furniture Store  
(Only furniture store in county –  
Established in 1907)



Note the red farm equipment in the rubble was not an  
original part of the store!

Sutton's True Value  
Hardware Store  
(Only full-service hardware  
store & lumber yard in county)





Methodist Church  
minus steepled  
roof



Christian Church

## Churches of Greensburg

(~11 Total)



Baptist Church





Kiowa County Signal (Newspaper Office)  
and Daylight Donuts (Local coffee shop)



# Main Street





Main Street, Greensburg, Kansas





No place was safe

# RESPONDERS IMMEDIATELY WERE ON SCENE

From every sector

Discussed activation procedures ahead of time. This may be very important when it comes time for reimbursement. It's important to know who can activate all these emergency resources and then initiate contact with them immediately. Who can activate the National Guard. Who needs to make the request? Who is your community emergency preparedness coordinator? Do you know their cell number or know where they live?





Greensburg Responders















Recovery began immediately. We were no longer fighting for our lives, but for our way of life. The decision to rebuild wasn't as hard as finding out how to rebuild. On the hospital level, we made the decision to rebuild within 24 hours and communicated to staff that we would pay them for 2 months while we "figured it out". We had our alternate site (Haviland clinic), so we did have a place to "meet". As a community, we set a large tent up in a city park and met there. Communication was the key. We met as a community to set priorities on rebuilding.







Kiowa County Memorial Hospital  
May 5 2007



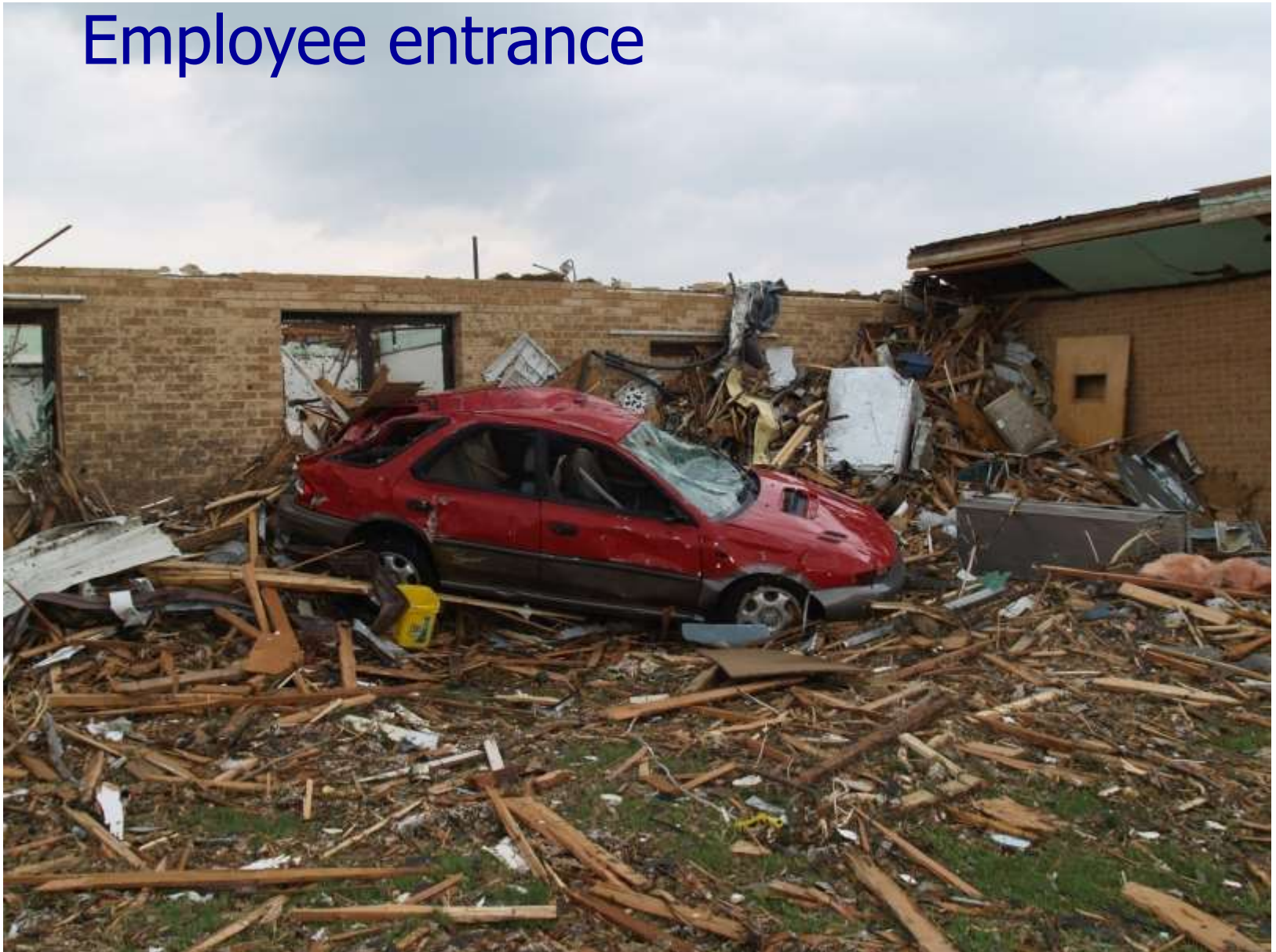


## Administrator's Office



Where do you store current records?

# Employee entrance



Emergency plans weren't followed!



# Emergency Management building and supplies



# Emergency Drive





# Handicap entrance



# PATIENT SERVICES

were non-existent



# Laboratory, EKG, Blood gases



# Emergency Room





# Radiology services

## X-ray, CT



# Ambulance services limited 1 of 2 ambulances destroyed





# Hospital Admissions



# Clinic services





# Business Services

were non-existent

# Business office – admissions, billing





**Health Information –**  
amazingly we saved about 95% of patient records.



**Dietary Services** — we were able to take food from the closed walk in freezers and feed in-town emergency services the first day





# Maintenance/security services, hospital transportation



# Our most important resource - our employees





**Recovery  
began  
immediately**

We made sure our premises were clear of victims – accounted for employees – on and off duty staff. We had an alternate site to report to. For three days, we were limited in property recovery by the fact that the town was sealed except for “essential” personnel. Most staff could not get through the roadblocks.





# Protected records



# Recovered pharmaceuticals – turned them into the appropriate authorities-

Make sure you know who you are working with



How many places do you store drugs?



We began salvaging and storing - (have in your plans where to get pods on demand and what are the costs. Some are much more expensive to bring in.) Be careful what records you preserve – it's very expensive.

Make sure you have spare tires for your vehicles.



# We met with officials - EPA, structural engineers, FEMA

Hint: know where your mercury thermometers are! Label refrigerators as to content. Get a business card file. Get business cards with your NEW contact information. Add minutes to cell phone!





# Met with insurance

**Know what your policy covers** – Do you have business continuation insurance? What does it cost to rebuild? Per square foot?

**Will FEMA help?** The objective of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program is to provide assistance to State, Tribal and local governments, and certain types of Private Nonprofit organizations so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies declared by the President.



# Met employee needs

- Find out employee needs
- Discuss employee concerns
- Recognize personal needs
- Flexibility is the key





Keep accurate time records.

Keep accurate records of any purchases.

Fema doesn't pay for purchases. They pay for leases. Arrange for a FEMA 101. There are many free publications available on the internet.

Meet needs one day at a time.

Take time for yourself.

Keep receipts and time sheets for everything.

Be willing to take a step back and know when to retreat or regroup.

When you pay money for an expert, listen to them.

Use volunteers to help – don't be afraid to ask for what you need. Just pay it forward.





Begin work on rebuilding – make sure you have a current code foot print prior to the disaster. If using federal funding, you have know where you were, to know what you can do now.



**REBUILDING**



# Temporary medical services were offered by Heart to Heart, Olathe, Kansas



Find out where you are going to eat





# Provide for necessities – sanitation, trash, lighting

Do you need porta potty “101” for anyone? It might surprise you!





Cell phone texting

**Find ways  
to communicate**





Open a temporary hospital  
within 2 ½ weeks, we were operational.



# Tear down the old workplace





# Find a new place to eat



# Find a new home for yourself





# Tear down our houses



Meet people you've never met before





And then.....

when you think you can  
take a break.....

**SURPRISE!!**

# A different set of emergency plans – another good outcome



And another.....

28 inches of snow, required a new  
set of plans





When all is said and done, we just need to learn lessons from our kids - you can have fun where ever you are, the pink thing in the port-a-potty is not soap and remember to wear shoes to the basement!



## MITIGATION WE HAD DONE PRIOR TO THE TORNADO

- Developed the use of picture ID name tags
- Used information from prior disasters to evaluate the safest place to evacuate to, i.e. basement
- Developed plans to make sure that patients were moved when the potential was there and helped employees to “buy into” that concept. Made moving “fun”. We had moved 5 times in the year prior to the tornado.
- After “people safety” developed plans to save essential items – set priorities
  - In house patient records moved with patients
  - Moved crash carts, med carts to safe area
  - Essential supplies and med carts to safe area
  - Essential supplies available where we moved to
  - Electronic information secure off site
- Evaluated our new beds to make sure they fit the elevator
- Allowed employees to make informed, independent decisions, as well as giving the responsibility to make decisions
- Developed an alternate site for emergencies, i.e. Haviland clinic 10 miles away
- Developed a policy to move out a portion of essential equipment from area of threat, i.e. ambulance
- Made plans to have essential personnel get public members downstairs
- Participated in local planning. Worked with our community on awareness.
- Developed redundant communications
- Participated in area emergency plans, so we knew how to access outside resources
- Followed state guidelines on NIMS/incident command training compliance
- Had a current code footprint of our site





Develop an evacuation plan based on best outcome, regardless of "inconvenience". Have employees "buy" into the process. Along with the right to act, comes the responsibility to act

# THINGS WE SHOULD HAVE HAD IN OUR PLANS

- Contacts for temporary storage
- Contacts for continuing medical care – mobile facility, as well as personnel
- Contacts for temporary buildings/facilities
- Contacts for bathroom/shower facilities
- Duplicate name tags for access
- A better system to maintain current inventory records , ie: older equipment and furniture still in use.

# New Priorities

- Get used to going to lots of meetings. Everyone wants to meet with you.
- Ask for what you need.
- Be flexible. Things change hourly



# Preparedness Lessons Learned

- Know your emergency plans. Evaluate subjectively where you shelter, based on the emergency. The shelter requirements for a tornado won't work for flooding.
- Make sure you have developed lines of communication with local entities prior to the disaster – “you know each other”. If you didn't get along or work together before the disaster, don't expect it to be easy. Also need to know state contacts and have them know you.
- Identify your entity's primary contact and make sure they have the “power” to make decisions that will be abided by within and outside your organization. There is no prioritization. ie: have to attend every meeting, every time. In Greensburg, this began as a twice daily meeting in the command center “Red October” with a KDEM selected incident commander. Transitioned to daily meetings and then every 72 hours and then turned over to local Emergency team after about 6 weeks
- Know the NIMs structure – ie: incident command protocols
- Make sure you know your organization (hazardous materials, refrigerators, mercury instruments)
- Evaluate your insurance on a regular basis. Know the cost to rebuild. Consider business interruption insurance
- Have alternate employee contact. (cell phone numbers) (know their emergency contact numbers)
- Secure current, active records
- Make sure all electronic information is backed up, and secure
- Practice plans, but be flexible and adaptable for each disaster
- Communicate needs – license replacement, ID replacement, etc.





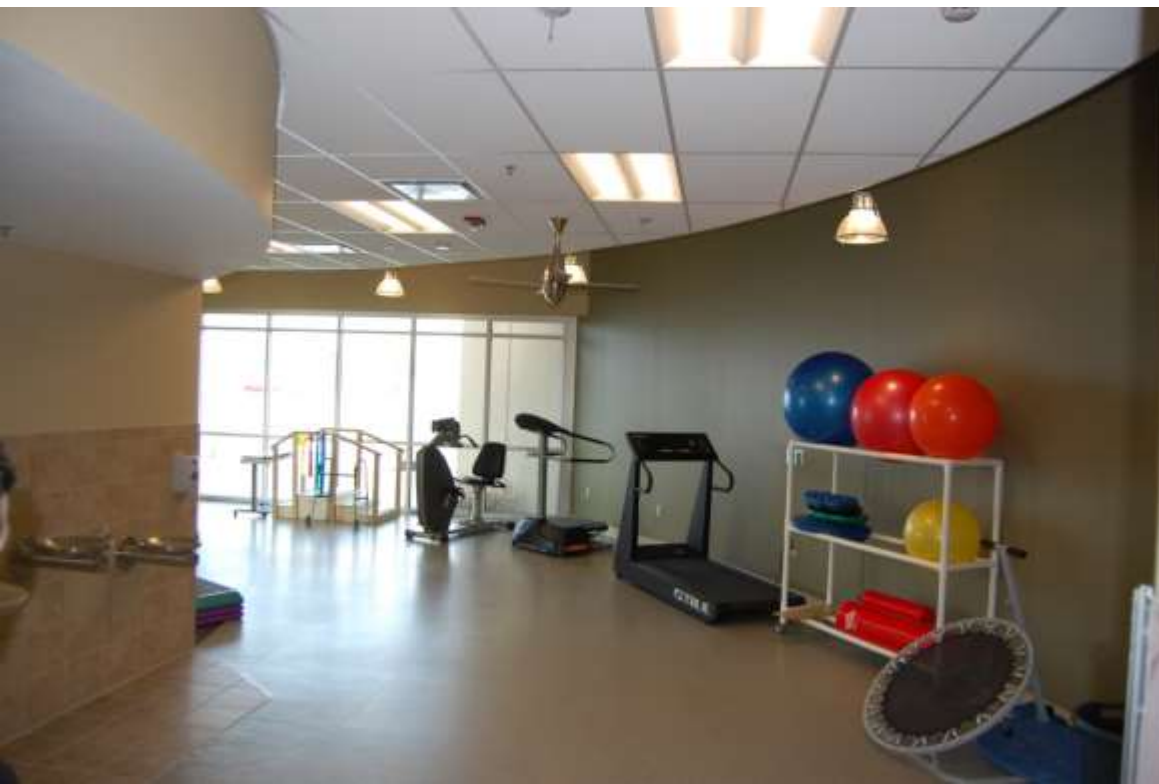
Be a survivor,  
not a victim























MJ Ryan, author of *AdaptAbility: How to Survive Change You Didn't Ask For*, says "The trick is to have what's called a growth mindset". Ask "what can I use from this to create success?"

Thank you for allowing me to share our story with you.

Our commitment is to tell our story and hope that we can in some way repay all the volunteers who have given their time and expertise, as well as those who have prayed for us.

Thank you.