



WIND, SOME GUSTS over 60 miles per hour, piled up tumbleweeds along fences, tree lines and buildings. Blowing dirt and wind were also responsible for accidents and several deaths in Thomas County.
Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

Cheyenne County declared disaster area with ongoing drought

Kansas Sens. Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture has designated 37 Kansas counties, including Cheyenne County, to be in a natural disaster area due to the severe ongoing drought.

The department designated Thomas, Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Logan, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman and Wallace counties, and Clark, Comanche, Ellis, Finney, Ford, Graham, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Lane, Meade, Morton, Ness, Norton, Pawnee, Phillips, Rooks, Rush, Scott, Seward, Stanton, Stevens, Trego, and Wichita, as disaster counties.

"Kansas continues to face one of the worst droughts since the Dust Bowl," said Roberts. "The lack of rainfall has had a devastating impact on our crops, and our ranchers are facing severe hardship due to a lack of feed caused by the drought."

"In spite of the exceedingly dry conditions," Moran said, "this designation will mitigate the drought's effects and enable farmers and ranchers to continue their agricultural operations."

Farmers and ranchers in eight counties also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous: Barber, Barton, Edwards, Kiowa, Osborne, Russell, Smith and Stafford.

All listed counties will now be eligible for disaster programs, such as the emergency loan program administered by the Farm Service Agency.

Affected farmers should contact their county office or go to www.fsa.usda.gov/ks.

High winds and blowing dirt cause accidents, fire in northwest Kansas

By Amanda Miller, Sam Dieter, Heather Alwin, Kevin Bottrell
The Saint Francis Herald

Northwest Kansas was hit with high winds and dry conditions last week, fueling a massive dust storm. Highways were shut down as motorists were left with zero visibility. After the dust settled, many traffic accidents and some fatalities were reported.

On Thursday, High Wind and Red Flag warnings went out, meaning that dry conditions and wind would increase fire danger. According to the official weather station in Goodland, wind gusts were recorded at 64 mph. The highest average wind speed over two minutes was 48 mph. The weather observer in St. Francis recorded winds of 40 mph, with gusts at 53 mph.

As winds whipped up to 64 mph, accidents were reported west of St. Francis, on I-70 and elsewhere across northwest Kansas.

The Department of Transportation was forced to close many roads across the area on Jan. 16. Interstate 70 from Colby to Burlington, Colo., K-27 from Goodland to Wheeler and U.S. 36 from Atwood to Colorado were all shut down for a period of time. The transportation department cited high winds and poor visibility as the reason.

The first accident was reported on U.S. 36, shortly before that highway was shut down. An empty cattle truck rolled over about eight miles west of St. Francis. The Cheyenne County sheriff's office first reported the rollover at 1:31 p.m. The truck was partially blocking the road until it was removed a couple hours later.

Later, a UPS truck caught fire on County Road 80 between roads 33 and 34, on the border between Cheyenne and Sherman Counties. The Cheyenne County Fire Department was the first to arrive on the scene. The fire bled into a patch of thistles or tumbleweeds, and the high winds pushed it into pasture ground, endangering some nearby cattle.

Cheyenne County had most of the fire out when Sherman Rural and Brewster firefighters arrived to provide support and mop up hot spots. It was estimated that the fire burned 30 to 40 acres.

Firefighters and first responders had difficulty getting to the fire because of its remote location and the lowered visibility due to blowing dust.

Emergency services from Cheyenne County and surrounding counties worked hard to keep everyone safe during the high wind and reduced visibility.

Other accidents were reported across northwest Kansas as blowing dust reduced visibility.

Five cars and six trucks piled up about two miles west of Rexford in a large crash, the Kansas Highway Patrol said. In a separate accident less than half a mile to the west, the patrol said, two semi-trailer rigs collided.

Fatalities in the Rexford accident included Leonard Scott Breeden, 51, of Colby; James Ocie Perrott, 57, of Perryton, Texas; and Jerold L. Lamb, 66, a truck driver from Florissant, Colo. All were killed when six semi-trailer rigs and five passenger vehicles piled up near mile marker 179 about 2 p.m.

Breeden was driving a small

van, Perrott a Chrysler and Lamb one of the semi rigs.

Anthony Scott Ortiz, 30, Garden City; Federico Ortiz, 47, Apple Valley, Calif.; Dennis Wayne Pitzer, 44, Leoti; and David Edward Hapes, 50, Holcomb were among the truck drivers taken to Citizens Medical Center. Another trucker, Abraham Wiebe-Peters of Chihuahua, Mexico, was unhurt.

Andrew Abdrakmanov Karstrom, 19, and Timothy W. Karstrom, 62, of Omaha, were both taken to Citizens with what the patrol called "possible injuries." They were in a 2012 Toyota involved in the pileup.

David Leroy Shoemaker, 51, and Dottie J. Shoemaker and Richard Shoemaker, all of South Dakota, were in a 1996 Ford F250. All were unhurt.

Rescue workers and law-enforcement had trouble getting to the scene, fighting the dust and trying to get around cars backed up on both sides of the wreck. Officers said that several injured drivers were trapped in their

vehicles. One woman who called dispatchers saying she was in her car later was found safe in a trucker's rig.

Area sheriff's offices and Department of Transportation workers helped the patrol shut down nearby roads and clear the accident scene.

Traffic was backed up for several miles, and the Department of Transportation shut down U.S. 83 from the Nine Mile Junction to K-383 and K-23 just east of Selden at 2:50 p.m. The closure was extended to Oberlin at 3:45 p.m.

The second accident happened when Gary Allen Godeill, 50, of New Haven, Conn., who was driving another semi-trailer rig toward Rexford, stopped almost a half a mile away from the pileup. The patrol reported that Wayne Haberstock, 69, of Alberta, Canada, hit his rig from behind. Godeill was OK, but Haberstock had to be taken to Hays Medical Center.

One fire official said the twisted

pile of metal and plastic, with fire burning in the center, was the worst he'd seen in 30 years of rescue work.

Steve Hirsch of Oberlin, training officer for the Sheridan County fire departments and the Thomas County department in Rexford, said it was frightening watching the fire rigs disappear into the wind-whipped dust clouds. Fire fighters had to get off the road and drive in the barrow ditch part of the way, he said, not knowing what might be coming at them.

"I couldn't have been proud of my people," he said. "They went into it not knowing what to expect, and at some danger to themselves. They performed admirably."

On Monday, Jan. 20, a wind advisory remained in effect throughout the afternoon for northwest Kansas. Blowing dust continued reducing visibility on area roadways. Strong sustained winds of 25 to 35 mph with gusts up to 50 mph were expected.

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Tim Burr at the
Saint Francis Herald at 785-332-3162

Winter Sports Special Section

This supplement will feature
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— and —
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Public Notices

Probate of will, letters filed in District court

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, Thursday, January 9, January 16, January 23, 2014. (02, 03, 04)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, KANSAS
PROBATE SECTION

In the Matter of the Estate of _____)
) Case No. 13-PR-23
RICHARD PAUL BRUBAKER, Deceased.)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are notified that on December 24, 2013, a Petition for Probate of Will and Issuance of Letters Testamentary under the Kansas Simplified Estates Act was filed in this Court by Darla L. Deeds, an heir and Executor named in the Last Will and Testament of Richard Paul Brubaker, deceased.

All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the Estate within four months from the date of the first publication of this notice, as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

Darla L. Deeds, Petitioner

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Petition filed in court requesting release

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, Thursday, January 23, January 30 and February 6, 2014. (04, 05, 06)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, KANSAS
FILED PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 59 OF THE
KANSAS STATUTES ANNOTATED

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
ROBERT J. BURR, Deceased _____ Case No. 13 PR 04

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED

You are hereby notified that on the 22nd day of January, 2014, a Petition has been filed in this court by JR Landenberger, duly appointed, qualified, and acting Executor of the Estate of Robert J. Burr, deceased, requesting that petitioner's acts be approved, account be settled and allowed; the heirs be determined; the will be construed and the estate be assigned to the persons entitled thereto; the court find the balances requested for executor and attorney fees and expenses are reasonable and should be allowed; the costs be determined and ordered paid; the administration of the estate be closed; and upon the filing of receipts the petitioner be finally discharged as the Executor of the Estate of Robert J. Burr, deceased and the petitioner be released from further liability.

You are hereby required to file your written defenses to the Petition on or before the 20th day of February, 2014, at 10:00 o'clock A.M., on the day, in said Court, in the City of St. Francis, in Cheyenne County, at which time and place said cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course and upon said petition.

JR Landenberger, Executor

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