

# HAIL

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Mrs. McCormick said. "Everyone is still assessing their damage. I have a pretty long list." All the insurance agencies were busy Monday, taking calls and information. According to the city office, there are just under 700 residential electric accounts, so roughly 700 residences in St. Francis. A majority of those residences would have some damage, and most would have a vehicle, so the insurance agencies expect to be quite busy in the next few weeks.

As devastating as the hail was in town, it also took a tremendous toll on any crops that were in its path. Corn fields, which just an hour earlier had been over 6-foot tall and tasseling, were stripped down to 2-foot tall stubs after the hail.

Many irrigated circles in the Lawn Ridge area south into Sherman County were completely destroyed. Fields near the Lawn Ridge Cemetery were completely mowed. It is unknown at this time the exact number of acres lost or damaged, but it is substantial, and probably equates into millions of bushels of corn. Other crops, such as soybeans, sunflowers and feed were also destroyed. At least one center pivot system was upended. The storm also dumped a large amount of rain in a small area. Some minor road flooding was experienced, and Rd 14 near the Zwegardt binsite was under water as of Monday morning.

Severe hail damage in an agricultural community such as St. Francis has a domino effect. Nearly all producers have access to crop insurance, but hail is still costly. When the bushels aren't produced, or fields are abandoned, it affects all of the dealers of necessary inputs, such as fertilizer and chemical dealers, aerial applicators, implement sales and repair. No bushels to handle also affects grain dealers and freight transporters. All of these ultimately trickle back down in to a loss for the community.

It will probably take several months to completely assess the cost of the storm, but it is expected to be a very large number.



**HAIL SPLASHED** into the water feature during the storm on Friday. Surprisingly, the ceramic chickens escaped any damage.



**NUMEROUS WINDOWS WERE BROKEN** with the force and size of the hail.



**CORN FIELDS WERE STRIPPED** and huge ponds were formed as rain and hail fell in a short time on Friday evening.

*Herald staff photos by Tim Burr and Karen Krien*

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