

Meteorologist says weekend could bring risk of tornados

By Jennifer Crossley Howard

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ANDERSON — Highs and humidity forecast this weekend are suited more for March than mid-January, a meteorologist says, but they could put Anderson at risk for tornados.

Today will be sunny with a high of 52 degrees.

A brief storm that swept through town Tuesday night resulted in damage on North Street, including an uprooted oak with a root bed the size of a small car. Other houses on the block had piles of large branches gathered near mail boxes for city pickup.

The National Weather Service categorized the storm as above average strength but below severe strength, said meteorologist Neil Dixon. Anderson Regional Airport received an inch of rain Tuesday night and 0.20 inches past midnight Tuesday.

A gulf air mass from Southern states makes such storms possible, he said, and will leave air moist and temperatures 10 degrees above normal by Saturday.

Anderson has a number of warm-weather storms that stir each spring without much warning, and residents should look out for them earlier this year.

"People should regard them as spring-like systems that could produce spring-like severe weather," Dixon said.

Despite the common perception that a mild winter indicates a hotter-than-normal summer, it's too early to draw such a connection, he said. The Climate Prediction Center's long-term outlook suggests the mild weather trend will extend to February, March and April, making a winter without consistently cold periods possible.

Shrubbery and trees are prematurely responding to the warmth.

Cherry trees sprouting pink flowers bloomed at the corner of McDuffie and Whitner streets Wednesday. Just a street over, winter holly trees thrived.

The temperature was forecast to fall to 29 degrees Wednesday night, three degrees below normal, but today's high will rise to 52 and will drop to 34 degrees tonight. Friday brings a 60 percent chance of showers with a low of 43 and a high of 58. Saturday the chance of rain increases to 70 percent with a low of 52 and a high of 62. Sunday will be mostly cloudy with a high of 66.

Hartwell Lake has retained its depth of almost a week ago, standing 651.83 feet above sea level on Wednesday, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Lake

Keowee's depth too remained unchanged at 5 feet below full pool. Lake Jocassee stood 22 feet below full pool, according to Duke Energy. a foot below last week.



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