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Thunderstorms expected to hit Upstate overnight

By Jennifer Crossley Howard

Monday, April 4, 2011

ANDERSON — Severe thunderstorms with gusts of wind reaching 60 mph were expected to sweep through the Upstate Monday night through early Tuesday morning, ushering in the spring storm season.

The storm was forecast to hit the Anderson area by 4 a.m., said Bryan McAvoy, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Greer. Conditions were ripe for a few tornados across the Piedmont, McAvoy said.

"It's just impossible to say what area," he said Monday evening.

"We anticipate a lot of down trees and power lines."

Wind gusts of 34 mph and up to an inch of rain were forecast for Anderson. The storm will interrupt a mostly sunny spring break for Anderson students.

Winds knocked out power to thousands Monday afternoon in Tennessee and tore roofs off buildings in Arkansas, the Associated Press reported.

The chance of severe weather came a little early this spring.

"May is typically when weather really ramps up," McAvoy said, but "April is a good month for us for tornados."

Home owners should especially heed severe-weather warnings, said Russ Dubisky, executive director of the South Carolina Insurance News Service.

"It's now the time of year when thunderstorms can become more frequent and intense," he said. "People should pay attention to local weather reports and know how to help protect their homes and families."

Rain from the storm should raise lake levels. Hartwell Lake's level has risen more than half an inch to 660.34 feet since March 30, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Lake Keowee is down about a foot to 97.6 feet, and Lake Jocassee is up almost a foot to 94.2 feet.

About a quarter inch of rain was expected to fall until 8 a.m. Tuesday. The day will clear up to a high of 63 degrees and winds should slow to at least 20 mph. The low drops to 36 degrees Tuesday night with patchy fog.

Wednesday will be sunny with a low of 45 and high of 70. Thursday will be mostly sunny with a high of 76 and low of 53.

The weekend will bring some clouds, but no rain is forecast.

Friday will be mostly sunny with a high of 79. The low will drop to 60 with a cloudy sky. Saturday will be sunny with a high of 84 and the night will be overcast and 62 degrees. Sunday will mostly sunny with a high of 85.



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