

"Rare" wind storm causing damage throughout Cheektowaga

By **Jim Herr** - April 5, 2018



A tree fell onto the trailer home at 18 Lobue Lane in Sky Harbor on April 4th. The resident was displaced. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)

CHEEKTOWAGA – A low-pressure system tracking across the northwest of our region Wednesday afternoon brought strong winds which toppled trees and power lines knocking out service to many residents in Cheektowaga.

National Weather Service Meteorologist Heather Kenyon says while our area does experience high wind events throughout the year, Wednesday's storm was rare.

The event peaked between Noon and 2 pm with sustained winds of 43 mph at the airport. "The peak wind was 63 mph," said Ms. Kenyon.

Cheektowaga Public Safety Dispatchers began logging calls regarding the wind around 8 am according to the police blotter report. They started small with police officers removing garbage cans from various roads and gradually increased as tree limbs came down blocking the flow of traffic. Around 16 calls for service for road obstructions were logged.

Another 15 calls for service were logged for low hanging or downed wires. A signal light snapped in front of Rescue Hose on Pine Ridge Road and another one came down at one of the entrances to the airport. The wind blew over a power pole around 9:30 am behind a home on S. Huxley Drive. Cleveland Hill firefighters said the pole fell on a shed and the main power lines were smoking.



An emergency signal outside the Rescue Hose fire station on Pine Ridge Road snapped blocking traffic on April 4th. (Submitted)

Later around 3:30 pm, two power poles snapped dropping three primary electrical lines into a field near Duke and Dale Roads.

"These winds are considered damaging winds so a lot of [the damage] had to do with just the strength of the winds. The ground was moist and saturated. It wasn't frozen like we had in December or January so that did help to topple some trees, but a lot of the trees snapped halfway," added Ms. Kenyon.

The first call for major damage happened around 11:11 am at 18 Lobue Lane in Sky Harbor. A tree fell onto the trailer home displacing the resident inside. Hy-view firefighters attended to the scene making sure there were no hazards and referred the matter to the building inspector.

Around 3:37 pm, a large tree crashed down on two vehicles parked on Nandale Drive blocking traffic. The town's Highway Department responded to chop up the tree and open the road.



A large tree crashed down on two vehicles parked on Nandale Drive blocking traffic on April 4th. (Submitted)

A tree blew over around 3:33 pm taking down wires near the intersection of Union Road and Losson Road resulting in traffic restrictions for several hours. The road reopened at 7 pm.

Harlem Road was shut down in both directions for around a half-hour while the power company and highway crews from the state and town removed a tree that blew onto wires.

Ms. Kenyon says residents should prepare for another wind event from Noon Friday until 11 pm. Sustained winds of 20 to 30 mph are forecasted with gusts

up to 50 mph.

"Even though these winds aren't as strong they might bring small limbs down as well," said Ms. Kenyon.