



Shelter Island Reporter

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TOWN OF SHELTER ISLAND • VILLAGE OF DERING HARBOR



ELEANOR LABROZZI (TOP) AND TED HILLS PHOTOS

The microburst's damage was centered near Tarkettle and South Midway roads (above and lower right) but heavy winds hit areas as far away as Nostrand Avenue (lower left). The gusts snapped mature trees in half and even knocked them down entirely, ripping their roots from the ground.

Violent winds hit Island, down trees on Tarkettle

Isolated 'microburst' blamed for thunderstorm's destruction

BY TED HILLS | STAFF REPORTER

"In some parts of the Island, there wasn't even a leaf on the ground, but in other areas you'd think we had a hurricane."

That's how Highway Superintendent Mark Ketcham described the peculiar thunderstorm that caused massive damage to a small corner of the Island, with intense winds snapping dozens of trees, even ripping a few mature trees out of the ground from the roots up.

The area near the corner of South Menantic Road and Tarkettle Road was most severely hit, while many other parts of the Island seemed entirely unaffected, aside from periods of heavy rain.

Nearby Lakeview Drive saw some damage to trees, and one tree fell alongside Nostrand Parkway. One large branch near Wades Beach even tore through a house.

Snapped telephone poles left a couple of homes in the Tarkettle area without power, but flickers of temporary power loss were reported sporadically across the Island.

The National Weather Service (NWS) had issued a severe thunderstorm warning for the East End in the early afternoon, which later became a warning of a thunderstorm capable of creating a tornado.

The likely culprit for the isolated violent damage, said Mr. Ketcham and Bay Constable Peter Vielbig, was a microburst, a weather phenomenon caused when a descending shaft of cool air in a thunderstorm hits the ground and fans out, like a high-velocity spray from a hose hitting a flat

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Town ready if big storm finally arrives

Town Board | Emergency plans crucial for 2010 hurricane season

BY CARA LORIZ | EDITOR

Last Wednesday's microburst, as bad as it was on Tarkettle and Midway roads, is nothing compared to a full-blown hurricane. Town Supervisor Jim Dougherty is hoping for a hurricane-free season, but "we are long overdue and experts are predicting some tough weather," he said.

The Island has not been hit by a hurricane since Bob, which came ashore in 1991. With local creek water temperatures at 86 degrees, something Councilman Peter Reich said he'd never seen before, conditions are ripe for a big storm.

'I think Shelter Island is the best place to be during a storm. We really have the ability to operate on our own and we do a good job of it.'

POLICE CHIEF JIM READ

On Tuesday, Town Board members reviewed the Island's emergency management plan with Police Chief Jim Read. A recap of the plan, which is continually being improved, the chief said, is being sent to all town departments and community groups with roles during an emergency. Those roles were summarized by Chief Read, the town's emergency management coordinator, as follows:

Police Department

The Shelter Island Police Department, located at North Ferry Road and Thomas Street, will serve as emergency operations center. The building has a back-up generator (which is tested weekly and serviced quarterly) and will "become a kind of hub for operations," Chief Read said.

Red Cross

The Shelter Island Chapter of the American Red Cross will serve dual roles as shelter coordinator and the Island's emergency medical response team. "We don't want to open a shelter unless we really, really have to," Chief Read said, preferring to shelter people in place, with neighbors helping neighbors. But if a shelter is needed, the school and the Senior

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