

Oaklawn homes are no longer 'unsafe'

BY SARAH TUCKER
The Wichita Eagle

The 16 Oaklawn homes previously marked "unsafe to occupy" by Sedgwick County are being rebuilt.

The EF-3 tornado that struck the Oaklawn neighborhood on April 14 caused no severe injuries but affected 429 homes in the Wichita area, according to a damage assessment by the Midway Kansas Chapter of the American Red Cross in late April.

Jennifer Tafoya's house on East Idlewild was one of them. She began rebuilding immediately only to find out she needed a permit to build.

Then her home was marked "unsafe to occupy" because her roof was severely damaged after a tree fell on it. Still, she stayed in her home because her insurance company wouldn't pay for a hotel stay, she said.

"The roof looked wavy because of the beams," Tafoya said. "The county orange-tagged me."

Orange tags allowed limited access to the buildings, while red tags prohibited entry.

Homeowners had 30 days to get their homes inspected or face demolition by the county.

"The houses were put on an



Mike Hutmacher/The Wichita Eagle

Gary Carty, left, and Tom Schwabauer with Sampson Construction Co. put siding on a house that had been one of 16 homes in Oaklawn the county condemned following a tornado that swept through the area in April.

abatement list," said Bud Lett, interim director of Sedgwick County's Department of Code Enforcement. "(The homeowners) were required to get engineers' evaluations of the structural damage and give the required list of repairs for each house."

After the inspection, homeowners like Tafoya could file

a permit to rebuild. This is standard procedure after storms, fires, tornadoes and other disasters, Lett said.

During the rebuilding process, the homes will also be inspected multiple times to make sure they are up to code, Lett said.

"Anything that is going to be concealed when finished is

looked at — plumbing, mechanical, electrical," Lett said. "We want to make sure everything that's being concealed has been installed to code."

Rick Waylan had 10 homes that were marked unsafe to occupy. His company, Oakview at the Park, owns and rents approximately 300

homes in the Oaklawn area, and he is currently rebuilding his damaged properties.

"Like a new build, (the county) has to make sure it meets safety standards," Waylan said.

Sedgwick County Commissioner Jim Skelton visits the Oaklawn community once or twice a week. He's glad to see

homeowners rebuilding. "It indicates that things are going to slowly return to the way things were," Skelton said. "It's much better than how it was after the tornado."

Andree Sisco, the Oakland Improvement District board treasurer, doesn't know when the area will be "back to normal," but she hopes most of the homes will be completed within a year's time.

"It's going to take those with more properties longer to finish," Sisco said.

"For us to have some of these homes rebuilt, it shows people care," Sisco said. "It means a lot."

At Tafoya's house, the roof and siding are repaired, but she still has to fix her shed, awning and fencing. She says the work is "going slowly."

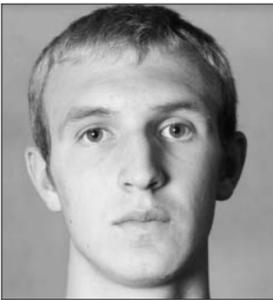
"There's so many people out here fixing (things), you have to wait," she said.

According to a Sedgwick County damage assessment released earlier this year, the tornado caused an estimated \$146.3 million in damage to homes and businesses. The tornado also caused extensive damage to the Pinaire Mobile Home Park, and it heavily damaged Spirit AeroSystems.

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North's Frankamp breaks bone in foot at tourney

BY TONY ADAME
The Wichita Eagle



Frankamp

Wichita North senior guard and Kansas commit Conner Frankamp suffered a broken bone in his left foot July 15 at an AAU tournament in St. Louis and is expected to be out 4-8 weeks.

Frankamp, 6-foot-1, plays for KC Run GMC and said in a phone interview that he went to an emergency care center in St. Louis immediately after the injury, where they did x-rays and told him there was a hairline fracture.

Doctors in St. Louis told Frankamp he'd be out four to eight weeks but wouldn't need a cast or surgery and put him in a walking boot. Frankamp was scheduled to see Dr. Bradley Bruner, a Wichita orthopedic surgeon, for a

follow-up. "I was going up for a layup, got undercut and when I came down my foot kind of went backwards," said Frankamp, who turned 17 last week. "I could tell right away that something was wrong because of the amount of pain I was in."

Frankamp averaged just over 35 points as a junior for North and was an All-State pick, leading the Redskins to the Class 6A tournament. He won his second straight gold medal for the U.S. Under-17 team this summer, leading the U.S. with 14.1 points per game and scoring 22 points in a gold-medal win over Australia.

"There's always a concern for me that he's going to get hurt because of how much he plays... he's been going non-stop since the end of our season," North coach Gary Squires said. "He had a concussion a couple of years ago and that was scary for everybody and he had to sit out a couple games. He likes to take it to the lane and sometimes he will get fouled pretty hard."

Catholic Charities effort promotes marriage

BY SIMINA MISTREANU
The Wichita Eagle

Catholic Charities of Kansas has launched a statewide campaign to promote the values and benefits of marriage.

The program, "Love Letters from Kansas," includes workshops aimed at married couples ("Within Our Reach") and at single people ("Within My Reach"). The organization also offers assistance with accessing community services, parenting classes and career development training.

"Kansas has a slightly higher divorce rate" than the national average, said Cynthia Colbert, executive director with Catholic Charities in Wichita. "Not only that, research shows that children raised by

parents in healthy marriages are more likely to have stronger outcomes when they're adults.

"We believe that by strengthening marriages and helping people have the skills to have healthy relationships, that strengthens families for the long term."

The program is funded by a \$1.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. About 10 percent of the grant was spent on an advertising campaign to raise awareness of the program and direct people to the campaign's website, www.KansasLoveLetters.com.

Catholic Charities of Kansas has provided marriage and relationship education through its Marriage for Keeps program to close to 1,100 couples since 2007 and around 135 adults since October 2011.

People interested in attending the workshops may call at 316-264-8344 or go to www.KansasLoveLetters.com.

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Nonprofit offering free lunches to Wichita children through Aug. 10

EAGLE STAFF

A Wichita nonprofit group will offer free lunches for children on weekdays from July 30 to Aug. 10, filling the gap between the end of the Wichita school district's summer lunch program and the start of school.

Free lunches will be served from noon to 1 p.m. at the following locations:

- Atwater Neighborhood City Hall, 2755 E. 19th St.

- Colvin Neighborhood City Hall, 2820 S. Roosevelt
- Evergreen Neighborhood City Hall, 2700 N. Woodland
- Stanley Neighborhood City Hall, 1749 S. Martinson
- Dellrose United Methodist Church, 1502 N. Dellrose
- Fairview Christian Church, 1650 Fairview
- Inter-Faith Ministries, 930 N. Market
- St. Anne Catholic Church, 2801 S. Seneca
- Urban League of Kansas,

2418 E. Ninth St. ■ Victory Baptist Community of Faith, 812 S. Oliver

The effort, organized by Partners for Wichita, accepts donations of cash, school supplies and food such as fresh, peelable fruit (oranges and bananas), fruit cups and packaged snack bars. For information about how to make a donation, e-mail partnersforwichita@cox.net or call 316-263-0810.

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