

Dear Friends -

The tornado here yesterday plowed right through Theodore Wirth park - less than a block away from us. I was out and heading north toward home, on highway 100, from an errand in South Minneapolis, and unbeknownst, even though I had the radio on, I was following its path less than five minutes after it hit. Because of at least 50 huge and beautiful trees that were torn from limb to limb and/or pulled out of the ground and piled onto the roads, I wasn't able get through on Glenwood to my Bryn Mawr, and Theo Wirth Parkway was blocked going north and south. I had to circle back south through St. Louis Park, and come back to cross 394 on Penn Av. Finally made it home, relieved to find our house and neighborhood virtually untouched. I headed in to the woods to the Garden to make sure the naturalist and other staff on duty were OK and knew that they could exit south, but not turn north - they were OK - but ran into many neighbors on the verge of tears at the sight of all the huge trees that had come down, including most if not all that were marked to save around the beach improvement area. It was heartbreaking to see the loss of the trees, especially so many of the tallest firs. Terrifying to see the power and helter-skelter damage. The tornado headed north across Theo Wirth Lake, then plowed across the north side - the most impoverished neighborhood in the city - an incredible swath. I'm thankful most folks are OK, especially looking at footage of Joplin Missouri. Feeling very, very lucky and still a bit shocked this morning.

Please take care, heed the weather warnings this season - go inside and seek shelter.

Emily