

Storms leave mounds of mud in Carson Valley

By Associated Press

Douglas County residents are digging out after flash flooding left up to 3 feet of mud and debris in some neighborhood streets south of Carson City over the weekend.

The Sierra storm that dumped more than an inch of rain in less than a half an hour also triggered the first tornado warning in the Reno area in six years. A series of funnel clouds were spotted Monday afternoon near Virginia City, near Interstate 80 east of Reno and northeast of Sparks, but none touched down and no serious damage was reported, the National Weather Service said.



Significant hail in South Lake Tahoe on July 18.
Photo/LTN

Flooding closed several major roadways in the eastern Carson Valley on Sunday, including Fish Springs, East Valley and Johnson Lane.

“We never had a tornado. It has to touch down to be a tornado,” said Wendell Hohmann, a service meteorologist in Reno.

Carson City public works manager Darren Schulz said that

although some roads were covered with mud, they didn't appear to suffer infrastructure damage.

"There were a number of garages dealing with some water and mud, but I don't know of any homes where it actually got into the home," Schulz said. "For the vast majority, it ripped through their yards, tore out all their landscaping."

Since early last week, monsoon-fueled thunderheads have swelled in the afternoon skies daily, bringing lightning, rain and hail throughout the region.

"We do get tornadoes here in Northern Nevada, but they're not very common," meteorologist Scott McGuire said. "The last time we issued a tornado warning was July 21, 2008."

Heavy rain and hail the size of a half dollar was reported Monday evening in Palomino Valley north of Reno, and 0.21 inches of rain fell in less than 10 minutes to the east in Lyon County.

On Sunday, the largest rainfall totals were 2.90 inches at Glenbrook, with Incline Village receiving more than 2 inches. In a little more than two hours, Incline Creek went from being basically dry to rising just below flood stage, McGuire said.

At Fish Springs in southern Douglas County, 1.35 inches of rain fell in 30 minutes, causing flash floods of the type that also hit the Johnson Lane and Indian Hills areas. Lightning strikes caused power outages affecting more than 12,000 customers in Douglas County.

"The rain would have been better if spread out over a couple of days as opposed to an inch in an hour," Fire Chief Stacey Giomi said.