

## INSURANCE COUNCIL OF TEXAS

*service, information, and representation for the property and casualty insurance industry*

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### For Immediate Release

April 17, 2003

## **Storm Damage Continues to Mount**

Damage from storms that struck North Texas on Saturday, April 5, Brownsville on Tuesday, April 8 and Lubbock/El Paso on Tuesday, April 15 is expected to exceed \$800 million.

The North Texas storm traveled nearly 200 miles from northwest of Abilene near Aspermont to the northeast Texas town of Sulphur Springs. Hail damage was reported in 15 counties including Dallas and Tarrant counties. Baseball sized hail (hailstones in excess of four inches in diameter) was reported in Haskell, Throckmorton, Palo Pinto, Rockwall and Collin counties. Tornadoes briefly touched down near the towns of Aspermont, Woodson, Graford and North Richland Hills. Three people were reported injured from hailstones.

“The path of this storm was eerily similar to the storm that struck Texas back in 1995, which at the time ranked in the top ten of the country’s costliest natural disasters,” said Mark Hanna, a spokesman for the Insurance Council of Texas. On May 5, 1995, hailstorms and flooding, particularly in the Fort Worth and Dallas areas, resulted in \$1.1 billion in insured losses.

The state’s largest insurance company, State Farm, which holds nearly a third of the homeowners and about a quarter of the auto insurance market said this month’s storm in North Texas caused an estimated \$265 million in insured losses. The losses included damage to 55,000 homes and 58,000 automobiles insured by State Farm.

Another major insurance company, Allstate, reported damage to 8,600 homes and more than 14,000 automobiles.

Farmers received nearly 23,000 claims for both auto and homeowners.

Three days later in the Rio Grande Valley, another violent thunderstorm erupted over Starr County and proceeded to plow directly into the city of Brownsville with baseball size hail.

State Farm reported 1,000 homes and 3,000 automobiles damaged at a cost in excess of \$11 million. Allstate reported damage to more than 1,300 homes and almost 2,000 automobiles, while Farmers had approximately 1,500 claims.

A sandstorm struck Lubbock and El Paso earlier this week with winds in excess of 60 miles an hour. State Farm said damage for both cities would exceed \$1 million.

All three storms were categorized as catastrophes, which resulted in insurance companies immediately calling for adjusters from various parts of the country to meet the needs of policyholders.

April and May are typically the months when Texas records its most violent thunderstorms.