



## Quick Facts

### Straightline Wind / Derechos

- Straight-line wind is defined by NWS as generally any wind generated by a thunderstorm that is not associated with rotation, and which is differentiated from tornadic winds.
- If winds flowing out from a thunderstorm exceed 58 mph, the storm is considered severe.
- Straightline winds are associated with the *outflow* and *downdraft* components of a thunderstorm.
- Straightline winds are similar to tornadoes in that they may generate a loud roaring sound at their approach and can produce significant damage, even to structures.
- Straightline winds differ from tornadoes in that damage falls in the same general direction due to lack of rotational wind; this is an important observation when completing storm surveys.
- **Derechos** (deh-RAY-chos) are significant producers of widespread straight-line winds that can last for more than 24 hours, and are at least 240 miles long with wind gusts exceeding 100 mph.
- On June 29, 1998 a derecho swept across eastern Iowa and produced wind gusts estimated at 123 mph.
- Derechos are most common in late spring and summer warm season (May through August).
- Derechos mostly occur from the Mississippi Valley into the Ohio Valley and southern Plains in the warm season.
- Derechos are not as common in the cold season (September through April) but during this time occur from Texas through the southeastern states.
- Those in particular danger include:
  - Campers/hikers may be killed by falling trees, the most common cause of death from derechos
  - Boaters and those on large bodies of water in danger of drowning due to high waves
  - Mobile home parks, especially those that are not bolted or tied down
  - Vehicles may be overturned
- Recent significant derecho events:
  - Deep South and Ohio Valley Derechos (May 3-8, 2009) – at least 7 fatalities
  - Quad Cities Derecho (July 21, 2008) – 2 fatalities, 4 injuries
  - Chicago Derecho (August 23, 2007) – 2 fatalities, 48 injuries



**On the Web:**

About Derechos ..... [www.spc.noaa.gov/misc/AbtDerechos/derechofacts.htm](http://www.spc.noaa.gov/misc/AbtDerechos/derechofacts.htm)  
 National Weather Service ..... [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)