



Southwestern Insurance Information Service

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Insurance News

Date: March 30, 2009

Source: Insurance Journal

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Central Texas Hail Storm Racks up \$160M in Losses

Many Central Texans are still cleaning up from a large hail storm on last week that knocked out windows, smashed roofs and dented thousands of automobiles causing an estimated \$160 million in insured losses.

The storm swept in from western Burnet County pummeling Marble Falls with golf ball size hail. Tennis ball size hail was reported in parts of Travis and Williamson Counties.

Hundreds of new cars in several automobile dealerships were heavily damaged. In all more than 22,000 vehicles were damaged in the storm and nearly 15,000 homes received insured losses, according to the insurer trade group, [the Insurance Council of Texas](#).

Major insurance companies have been advertising in the local media alerting policyholders on where to call to report their claims.

This is the second time in less than a year that parts of Austin have been pounded by a catastrophic hailstorm. On May 14, 2008, 20,000 claims came from a storm producing 65 mile per hour wind gusts and large hail. The May 14 storm caused \$50 million in insured losses.

Other severe storm losses last week were reported in Sherman and in Houston.

Another insurance industry trade group, [Southwestern Insurance Information Service](#), warns there may be unscrupulous contractors ready to take advantage of storm victims.

"Most contractors are reputable and willing to provide references of those for whom they have performed work in the past," says Sandra Helin, public affairs director for SIIS. "Getting repair work done to damaged roofs and fences can be a positive experience if people use building contractors with a history of quality work."

She said consumers should ask for references and make sure to secure written agreement for warranty work to be performed.

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"Speak with your insurance claim representative before making any firm commitments for repair," she suggested. "Experienced claim people can be invaluable in these types of situations."

Helin also recommended getting proof of licensure and a written estimate from contractors and get all guarantees, warranties and promises in writing.

Sources: Insurance Council of Texas, Southwestern Insurance Information Service

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