



Sheriff Steve Stovall

Stephenson County Sheriff's Office

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SEVERE STORM CAUSES EXTENSIVE DAMAGE IN LENA; NO FATALITIES OR SERIOUS INJURIES REPORTED

At approximately 3:40 p.m. this afternoon, a severe storm, believed to be a tornado, moved through the Village of Lena in Stephenson County, causing significant and widespread damage.

Emergency responders arrived within minutes and are actively conducting coordinated damage assessments, welfare checks, and search operations throughout the affected areas. At this time, no fatalities or serious injuries have been reported.

The storm caused extensive damage to homes, businesses, and infrastructure across the village. Numerous roadways are obstructed by debris, and hazardous conditions persist due to downed power lines, compromised structures, and scattered debris fields.

Law enforcement and fire personnel from across northwest Illinois are actively assisting with response and recovery efforts, including resources from the Illinois State Police. All agencies are operating under a unified, coordinated response to stabilize the area, protect life and property, and assist impacted residents.

Access to the Village of Lena is strictly restricted at this time. Entry is limited to residents, emergency responders, utility personnel, and individuals with a verified, legitimate need to be in the area. These restrictions are being actively enforced to protect public safety and ensure emergency personnel can operate without obstruction. The public is urged to avoid the area until further notice.

Damage assessments remain ongoing, and any estimates at this stage would be preliminary. The National Weather Service is expected to conduct a formal damage survey to determine the official cause, track, and rating of the storm.

“We are extremely fortunate that this storm did not result in loss of life or serious injury,” said Sheriff Steve Stovall. “Our focus remains on ensuring the safety of our residents, securing the affected areas, and supporting the Village of Lena as recovery efforts move forward.”

Additional information, including road closures, utility restoration timelines, and available assistance resources, will be released as it becomes available.

Sheriff Stovall will hold a press conference on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. to provide an update on the storm response and ongoing recovery efforts. The briefing will take place in the rear

parking lot of Lena-Winslow Junior High School, located at 517 Fremont Street in Lena.

The Stephenson County Sheriff's Office will continue to provide updates through official channels.

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