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Joplin Resident with Local Ties Reflects

A year ago today an Atchison County native was taking shelter in her home in Joplin for a tornado warning, as storms were incoming.

After the coast was clear, Janet Elias emerged from her home with everything still intact.

However, when she began contacting her friends, she learned others weren't so lucky.

(Play Audio) RT: :10

That's because her friend lived near Saint John's Hospital, which was in the path of up to a mile wide EF5-multiple vortex tornado that ripped through southern parts of Joplin for 38 minutes, traveling over 22 miles.

Elias' home was two miles removed from the path of the tornado.

For the next several hours, locating her friend and finding out the damage to her home were the top priorities.

(Audio Continues) RT: :24

Elias took vacation time for the next week from her job as a traveling saleswoman for Blish-Mize to help her friend, and to help others clean-up, working in distribution centers, serving food and water through her local church.

She says it's been a lengthy road and recovery for her friend.

(Audio Continues) RT: :32

To date, the 161 casualties made the tornado the seventh deadliest tornado outbreak in U.S. history.

Estimated costs from the storm are around two-point-eight billion dollars.

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