

(Okla.)-Residents, Crews Search Through Rubble In Moore

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 05/21/2013 08:28 AM

Photo: Abby Madi, left, and Peterson Zatterlee comfort Zatterlee's dog, Rippy, on Monday, May 20, in Moore. (Photo courtesy www.CNN.com)

MOORE, Okla. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) – It was a long night in the tornado-blasted suburbs of Oklahoma City and residents are bracing for a long day as well, digging through the rubble and hoping not to add to a death toll that's at least 24.

Overnight, spotlights illuminated massive piles of shredded cinder block, insulation and metal as crews did their grim work. Scores of blocks that used to be neighborhoods have been flattened.

More severe weather is in the forecast for parts of the central United States this week. The Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., says golf ball-sized hail, powerful winds and isolated, strong tornadoes could strike areas of Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma today. The area at risk does not include Moore, where search and rescue operations continue; however, showers and thunderstorms are expected with heavy rainfall. Forecasters say the greatest risk for severe weather today includes the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

President Barack Obama will be meeting with his disaster response team, including Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, today before delivering a statement on the devastating tornado.

Obama has declared a major disaster in Oklahoma, ordering federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts. The president also spoke Monday with Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin and Rep. Tom Cole, whose home is in the heavily damaged area.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Craig Fugate is heading to Oklahoma today to ensure that federal resources are being properly deployed.