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May. 22, 2013

President Barack Obama pledged full federal government support Tuesday morning as rescue workers continued to search for survivors amid the destruction left by the tornado which devastated Moore and parts of Oklahoma City.

Monday's report of 51 fatalities has been revised downward; counts likely will remain very fluid today. As of Tuesday morning, the death toll is at 24 and nine of those are reported to be children.

At 3:56 p.m. Monday, a tornado formed in McClain County and its 20-mile path went through Newcastle, Moore and south Oklahoma City, according to the NWS.

The NWS has given the tornado a preliminary rating of at least EF-4; EF-5 is the highest rating on the scale, which rates tornadoes by visual assessment of the damage and debris path.

Rain was falling in parts of the metro area Tuesday morning and The National Weather Service has issued a severe thunderstorm watch through 7 p.m. for roughly the southern half of Oklahoma including Oklahoma, Canadian and Cleveland counties.

A slight risk area is south and east of a line from Sayre and Elk City to Oklahoma City and Chandler. In the metro area the main concern will be severe hail — up to the size of half dollars — through mid afternoon.

The most likely period for severe thunderstorms will be through 8 p.m. Tuesday, and the risk will end from northeast to southeast this afternoon and evening. By

afternoon, larger hail and strong winds will be the main concerns mainly across

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Cleveland, Lincoln, McClain, Oklahoma and Pottawatomie counties. Falmi said other counties could be added after additional damage assessment.

For Oklahoma residents seeking non-emergency disaster or health and human service information, contact your local 211. Services are available 24 hours a day by dialing 211 from your home or cell phone. Only call 911 for emergencies.

To apply for disaster assistance, individuals and business owners may call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or go online at www.disasterassistance.gov.

The designation ensures federal assistance for housing repairs or temporary housing, U.S. Small Business Administration low-interest loans for individuals and businesses to repair or replace damaged property, disaster unemployment assistance and grants for serious needs and necessary disaster expenses not met by other programs.

Additionally, the declaration grants public assistance for state and local governments in the five counties to assist with debris removal and emergency protective measures to include overtime for first responders. The declaration also provides direct federal assistance in the form of bottled water, blankets, meals-ready-to-eat and other bulk supplies.

Search and rescue workers from many agencies including the Edmond Police Department, responded to the affected area Monday afternoon.

On Monday, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission reported more than 61,500 outages related to the storm.

Edmond's forecast for the week calls for a 50 percent chance of rain Tuesday afternoon, dropping to a 40 percent chance Tuesday night. Wednesday will be most sunny with a high near 81. Wednesday night through Friday night will be

accompanied by a 20-40 percent chance of thunderstorms, with the highest chance

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