With parched yards and cropland, most people welcomed the rain that fell in Scott County starting around 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 1.

What wasn't welcomed by anyone was the storm's thunder and lightning.

As the front approached, observers could see billowing dark-colored clouds and experience cooler air, yet another welcomed change from the 100-plus temperatures and hair-dryer blasts of hot air that have been withering farmers' fields and residents' lawns and flowers.

But those improvements were also accompanied by nearly constant lightning and booming thunder.

Then the rain came, large, intermittent drops at first, which soon changed to a near deluge. In Austin, the rain came in three waves, two heavy and the last a lighter shower. Scottsburg and surrounding areas got more constant downpours, followed by one to three incidents of hail ranging in size from peas to dimes.

No hail damage was reported.

As the storms progressed, lightning became more frequent, especially around the Hardy Lake area and Scottsburg. Winds picked up, too. County Highway Superintendent Todd Carr said stand-by workers were sent around 9 p.m. to McNeely and Goshen Roads to remove downed trees reported laying across county roads.

Two families on Double or Nothing Road south of State Road 56 East had trees that simply could not take the wind. One crashed down, scraping the north side of a two-story farmhouse. Large portions and limbs fell from at least three trees in the yard of Mike and Beth Thompson, nearly damaging the north side of their home just south of the farmhouse.

"We saw the littler tree out back lose a limb. Our daughter Leslie found the bigger ones on the north side," advised Mike Thompson, who said it wasn't the first time the family had had downed trees. He was supervising the clean-up job his daughter and son-in-law were attempting early on the afternoon of Monday, July 2, with a chainsaw and a lot of muscle power.

Back in Scottsburg, people in the Wendy's restaurant west of the I-65 interchange evacuated the building around 9 p.m. when lightning apparently hit power lines outside the building, causing a heck of a power surge inside the restaurant.

That strike, according to Scottsburg Fire Chief James Richey, caused several small fires in the ceiling area of the building. By the time the fire department arrived in response to a 9-1-1 call, ceiling tiles were on fire, but the fire looked worse than it was, he said.

"We could see flames coming from the ceiling, but we were able to get it under control pretty quick. We had a crew that provided horizontal ventilation and then a crew on the roof got vertical ventilation going, so we were able to pour on a lot of water pretty fast," he explained.

Very little of the kitchen equipment was damaged by flames, but the ceiling was badly damaged as was carpeting.

The department had two other runs around the time of the fire. One was a medical run. The third was a little unusual. Residents on the ground floor of one of the apartment units at The Woods off U.S. Highway 31 North reported hearing smoke/fire alarms going off in the vacant unit above them.

Chief Richey said firemen tried calling the three emergency contact numbers provided for the apartment complex but could not reach personnel. Consequently, firefighters used one of their ladders to reach the unit's balcony and broke in through a sliding door.

They didn't find a fire. Rather, they discovered that rain had leaked through the roof and short-circuited the smoke/fire alarm.

"The situation had to be checked out. We were just glad it wasn't a fire," stated Chief Richey.

At the Highway Department on South Main Street, Supt. Carr discovered at the start of the Monday workday that the building's tower was hit by lightning. The bolt knocked out the department's radio system and messed up a few computers.

Similar tower problems were reported by the Scottsburg Water Department. Apparently, that structure was also hit by lightning.

Damage estimates were not available.