

Freak Beijing storm turns day into night

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China correspondent Stephen McDonnell and ABC cameraman Rob Hill saw day turn into night as a freak storm swept across the capital Beijing today.

"It was pitch black outside and you could see people looking out from the office towers across the road from us," McDonnell said.

"In a couple of the photos you can see a clock in the distance showing it was around 11:30 am local time."

The storms were expected to affect western and northern Xinjiang, most part of Inner Mongolia, north-east China and north China.

Today's extreme weather follows yesterday's hail storms across eastern China's Anhui province, which killed 14 people and injured more than 180, AFP reports.

Anhui's Civil Affairs Bureau said that more than 10,000 people were evacuated and nearly 9,700 houses collapsed in yesterday's severe storm.

Anhui was struck by hail and winds of up to 104 kilometres per hour, causing \$82 million worth of damage.

A similar hail storm struck the region in the first week of June, killing 23 people and injuring more than 200.

Officials have warned residents that more dangerous weather could follow.