

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - August 2011

Location	Date/Time	Deaths & Injuries	Property & Crop Dmg	Event Type and Details
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TEXAS, South

(TX-Z248) ZAPATA, (TX-Z249) JIM HOGG, (TX-Z250) BROOKS, (TX-Z251) KENEDY, (TX-Z252) STARR, (TX-Z253) HIDALGO, (TX-Z255) CAMERON, (TX-Z257) COASTAL CAMERON

08/01/11 00:00 CST	0	Drought
08/15/11 23:59 CST	0	

Despite little to no rainfall from the second full week of July to just before the end of the month, impacts from the heavy rains of early July manifest themselves in maintaining similar drought conditions as August began, likely a result of fairly typical temperature and humidity across the region for most of July. Drought ranged from Moderate (D1) to Severe (D2) in most of the Rio Grande Valley to Extreme (D3) in much of the Ranchlands from Starr and Zapata County north into portions of Jim Hogg and Brooks County.

(TX-Z252) STARR

08/02/11 00:00 CST	0	Drought
08/08/11 23:59 CST	0	

Scattered thunderstorms developing in warm and humid air west of the core of weak Tropical Storm Don on July 29th produced locally welcome rain across the Upper Valley; another round of scattered showers and storms would impact the area in residual unstable air on July 30th. The combination of these two days of rain, which produced up to an inch of rain in a few spots, would reduce the drought level slightly - but for only a week as hot and dry weather returned Extreme Drought (D3) to the region before mid month.

(TX-Z253) HIDALGO

08/03/11 15:00 CST	15K	Wildfire
08/03/11 20:00 CST	0	

A suspected spark from a local utility vehicle caught grassland on fire during the afternoon of August 3rd, which quickly engulfed areas around the small community of Puerto Rico. The fire occurred in areas where Severe to nearly Extreme Drought continued, and was driven by the combination of the drought conditions and southeast winds gusting between 20 and 24 mph, relatively humidity falling to or just below 25 percent, and "Dry" fuels.

(TX-Z249) JIM HOGG, (TX-Z252) STARR

08/09/11 00:00 CST	0	Drought
08/15/11 23:59 CST	0	

After the local rains from Tropical Storm Don had briefly helped Drought conditions mainly in Starr County the first week of August, dry, hot weather began deteriorating conditions again by the 2nd week of August. Extreme (D3) Drought returned to most of Starr and all of Jim Hogg County by the 9th.

(TX-Z257) COASTAL CAMERON

08/10/11 17:00 CST	1	0	Rip Current
08/10/11 17:00 CST		0	

Direct Fatalities: M44IW

Rough swells, set up by offshore seas of 4 to 5 feet with a period between 6 and 7 seconds, set up by persistent southeast winds of 15 to 18 knots with higher gusts well offshore, produced moderate rip currents along South Padre Island August 10th. The currents are believed to have been a key reason for the first drowning in August and second of the summer.

The drowning was the sixth of 2011, five by rip or alongshore current. Each of the five was a resident of northern Mexico.

(TX-Z248) ZAPATA, (TX-Z249) JIM HOGG, (TX-Z250) BROOKS, (TX-Z251) KENEDY, (TX-Z252) STARR, (TX-Z253) HIDALGO

08/16/11 00:00 CST	0	Drought
08/31/11 23:59 CST	5.97M	

The latter half of August saw Drought conditions deteriorate, a result of days of heat and wind after the first, which continued for most days until month's end - with only a few periods of welcome rainfall, particularly on the 26th and again on the 31st. Along and west of Highway 281, high temperatures reached 100 or higher on twenty days of more, with McAllen/Miller Airport falling one day shy of their 2009 record (28 vs. 29). Dry, hot weather peaked on the 28th and 29th, when even areas near the coast pushed past 100 degrees.

Crop impacts were fully realized by the end of August, when a combination of crop damage with production loss of cotton, corn, and

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sorghum totalled more \$25 million (preliminary insured) for the Rio Grande Valley as a whole (Starr, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy). This was an increase of more than \$17 million from the preliminary numbers (\$8.8 million) which were largely realized during the late spring (May/June). Preliminary totals were \$26,721,548, including earlier damage recorded this year. For each event, values listed are totals based on an additional lump sum of \$17,886,641, added since last report (late July).

(TX-Z256) COASTAL WILLACY

	08/18/11 10:00 CST		0	Wildfire
	08/18/11 19:00 CST		0	

Several wild fires occurred on August 17th and 18th in Cameron and Willacy County, from a combination of human carelessness and a continued record hot month with little rainfall, embedded in a water year (since October 1, 2010) drought which had inland areas of Cameron and Willacy County ranked in the top 10 despite welcome rainfall in late June, and coastal areas ranked in the top 5, where much less rain fell.

A controlled burn on the Rancho Viejo Golf course grew out of control briefly shortly after 9 AM on August 17th, when gusty winds spread flames to a pile of nearby brush. Stacking of tree limbs well above permit rules likely contributed to the quick spread. No structures were threatened. Another fire sparked along Lewis Lane in Harlingen, grew to just below 10 acres, and burned down a shed and some fencing but no significant structures, during the afternoon of the 17th. The largest fire burned hundreds of acres in Willacy County on the 18th.

(TX-Z254) WILLACY, (TX-Z255) CAMERON, (TX-Z256) COASTAL WILLACY, (TX-Z257) COASTAL CAMERON

	08/23/11 00:00 CST		0	Drought
	08/31/11 23:59 CST		11.90M	

Hot, rain free, and breezy weather from the 9th through the 24th brought an end to the temporary relief that Don had brought at the end of July near the coast. The dry conditions manifest themselves into Severe (D2) Drought across the eastern half of Cameron and Willacy County beginning August 23rd and continuing through month's end.

Crop impacts were fully realized by the end of August, when a combination of crop damage with production loss of cotton, corn, and sorghum totaled more \$25 million (preliminary insured) for the Rio Grande Valley as a whole (Starr, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy), as reported by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. This was an increase of more than \$17 million from the preliminary numbers (\$8.8 million) which were largely realized during the late spring (May/June). In total, \$26,721,548 in corn, cotton, and sorghum damage and loss was realized by the 2010/2011 drought at the end of August. Values listed for each county are based on the additional \$17,886,641 added since last report (in late July).