

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - March 2009

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

(TX-Z253) HIDALGO

	03/05/09 12:00 CST		25K	Wildfire
	03/05/09 17:00 CST		0	

The combination of southeast wind gusts in excess of 35 mph, humidity which fell just below the critical 35 percent threshold, and increasingly dry grasses were enough to rapidly spread a small trash fire to more than 1,500 acres in northern Hidalgo County near Edinburg. The fire, which threatened a number of homes in at one colonia and perhaps another neighborhood, was quickly contained by evening as winds dropped a bit and humidity rose quickly.

(TX-Z248) ZAPATA

	03/07/09 13:00 CST		0	Wildfire
	03/07/09 22:00 CST		0	

Gusty southerly winds between a developing low pressure trough extending through West Texas toward the slopes of the Sierra Madre Oriental combined with broad high pressure across the Gulf of Mexico to maintain the threat for rapid spread of wildfire across much of Deep South Texas in early March.

On March 7th, a fire of unknown causes rapidly spread across ranchland in the Rio Grande Plains, and was contained before threatening any structures. Hundreds of acres burned.

(TX-Z251) KENEDY

	03/28/09 12:00 CST		0	Wildfire
	03/29/09 12:00 CST		0	

A major spring storm, rotating from the Texas Panhandle through extreme north Texas and into the Mid-Mississippi Valley between March 27th and 28th created extreme weather contrasts across the state, ranging from a blizzard in Dalhart and Amarillo to searing, record heat across the Rio Grande Valley on the 27th.

By the 28th, a front has raced through most of the state, including Deep South Texas. Behind the front, temperatures remained a few degrees above normal, but humidity crashed below 15 percent and winds continue at a moderate 15 to 25 mph from the north.

The combination of increasingly dry ranchland with extremely low humidity and winds gusting occasionally above 25 mph helped spread a wildfire across portions of the King Ranch on March 28th, continuing into the next day. A second, smaller wildfire would affect nearby areas two days later.

(TX-Z248) ZAPATA, (TX-Z249) JIM HOGG, (TX-Z250) BROOKS, (TX-Z251) KENEDY, (TX-Z252) STARR, (TX-Z253) HIDALGO, (TX-Z254) WILLACY, (TX-Z255) CAMERON, (TX-Z256) COASTAL WILLACY, (TX-Z257) COASTAL CAMERON

	03/31/09 00:00 CST		0	Drought
	03/31/09 23:59 CST		0	

Below normal precipitation, above normal temperatures, and nearly continuous drying winds were common across Deep South Texas during the month of March. In general, dry conditions persisted across the region since mid November 2008. Soil moisture became abnormally to excessively dry, allowing severe to extreme drought to develop by the end of March.

According to The United States Drought Monitor, severe drought conditions (D2) had extended into much of Deep South Texas, with extreme drought conditions (D3) over the extreme northern sections of Brooks and Kenedy counties, by the end of March. The drought conditions would intensify during April, increasing stress on agriculture, including crops, pastures and grasslands.