

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - March 2011

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

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- REESE VLG [33.60, -102.02]

	03/04/11 21:40 CST	0	Thunderstorm Wind (MG 52 kt)
	03/04/11 21:40 CST	0	Source: Mesonet

The Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet site at Reese Center recorded a 60 mph thunderstorm wind gust at 21:40 CST. No damage was reported.

A complex of thunderstorms developed over the plains of eastern New Mexico late in the day on the 4th and moved southeastward over the western and central South Plains of west Texas during the evening hours. The storms, occasionally accompanied by cloud-to-ground lightning, produced at least one localized severe wind gust in Lubbock County.

	(TX-Z024) BRISCOE, (TX-Z025) HALL, (TX-Z026) CHILDRESS, (TX-Z027) BAILEY, (TX-Z031) MOTLEY, (TX-Z032) COTTLE, (TX-Z033) COCHRAN, (TX-Z037) DICKENS, (TX-Z038) KING, (TX-Z039) YOAKUM, (TX-Z040) TERRY, (TX-Z042) GARZA, (TX-Z043) KENT, (TX-Z044) STONEWALL	0	Drought
	03/08/11 00:00 CST	0	
	03/31/11 23:59 CST	0	

An extended dry period over west Texas, as well as much of the state, resulted in the emergence of Severe (D2) to Extreme (D3) drought during the month of March. By the 8th, Severe (D2) drought had developed over portions of the southern Rolling Plains. The drought deepened and expanded over the region through the month, and by month's end Severe (D2) drought encompassed most of the western South Plains, the Rolling Plains and the extreme southeastern Panhandle, with Extreme (D3) drought developing over the southern Rolling Plains (including King and Stonewall Counties) by the 29th.

Although the drought developed during the region's typical cool and dry season, rainfall for many areas of the South Plains region has barely approached one inch between October (2010) and March (2011). These totals amount to two to four inches below normal and rank as one of the driest October to March periods on record for the region. Keetch-Byram Drought Index values ranged between 500 and 600 by the end of March.

Through March, the impact of drought was already evidenced in increased wildfire activity. Impacts on agriculture, the area's primary economy, were minimal through March. However, area crops were beginning to show signs of stress as winter wheat crops were beginning to suffer. It was evident that if rain did not occur during April, wheat crops would be severely impacted and cotton planting would be delayed.

(TX-Z030) FLOYD, (TX-Z031) MOTLEY

	03/10/11 12:30 CST	0	Wildfire
	03/10/11 15:00 CST	0	

Warm, dry, and breezy weather contributed to the development of two large fires in Motley and Floyd Counties. The first fire developed around 12:30 CST near Flomot (Motley County). This fire grew to burn approximately 700 acres before it was contained around 15:00 CST. A second fire ignited southwest of Floydada around 13:30 CST and burned an estimated 300 acres. No significant damage was reported.

(TX-Z030) FLOYD

	03/13/11 17:30 CST	0	Wildfire
	03/13/11 22:30 CST	0	

A large wildfire ignited near Farm to Market Road 1065 in extreme northeastern Floyd County during the late evening hours of the 13th. The fire sparked, and spread rapidly, following the passage of a cold front which brought sustained northerly winds of 20 mph to 25 mph. The Texas Forest Service reported that 750 acres burned in the fire. No damages were reported.

HOCKLEY COUNTY --- 1.0 SE ANTON [33.81, -102.16]

	03/19/11 16:41 CST	0	Hail (0.88 in)
	03/19/11 16:41 CST	0	Source: COOP Observer

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 9.0 NNW SHALLOWATER [33.80, -102.04]

	03/19/11 16:49 CST	0	Hail (1.75 in)
	03/19/11 16:49 CST	0	Source: Storm Chaser

A storm chaser reported golfball size hail along Farm to Market Road 179 in extreme northwestern Lubbock County.

HALE COUNTY --- 7.0 NE ABERNATHY [33.90, -101.76]

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	03/19/11 18:03 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.10 mi , W: 75 yd)
	03/19/11 18:03 CST		0	Source: Trained Spotter

Skywarn storm spotters and chasers observed a brief tornado northeast of Abernathy shortly after 18:00 CST. Witnesses described a funnel cloud that extended three-quarters of the way to the ground beneath a ragged wall cloud. Dust was seen rotating on the ground beneath the visible funnel. No damage was reported.

HOCKLEY COUNTY --- LEVELLAND [33.58, -102.37]

03/19/11 18:42 CST	0	Hail (0.88 in)
03/19/11 18:42 CST	0	Source: Public

HOCKLEY COUNTY --- LEVELLAND [33.58, -102.37]

03/19/11 18:45 CST	0	Hail (1.75 in)
03/19/11 18:46 CST	0	Source: Public

Multiple public reports of large hail that ranged in size from nickels to golfballs were received between 18:42 CST and 18:46 CST in Levelland. No damage was reported.

FLOYD COUNTY --- 4.0 S LOCKNEY [34.06, -101.43]

03/19/11 18:57 CST	0	Hail (1.00 in)
03/19/11 18:57 CST	0	Source: Public

The public reported quarter size hail along Farm to Market Road 378 south of Lockney.

HALE COUNTY --- 1.0 S PLAINVIEW [34.19, -101.70], PLAINVIEW [34.20, -101.70]

03/19/11 19:25 CST	0	Hail (1.00 in)
03/19/11 19:35 CST	0	Source: Storm Chaser

Reports of quarter size hail were received along a swath on the east side of the city of Plainview between 19:25 CST and 19:35 CST.

HOCKLEY COUNTY --- 2.0 NE SMYER [33.60, -102.15]

03/19/11 19:28 CST	0	Hail (1.75 in)
03/19/11 19:28 CST	0	Source: Storm Chaser

Storm chasers reported golfball size hail near Smyer. No damage was reported.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- SHALLOWATER [33.68, -101.98]

03/19/11 19:43 CST	0	Hail (0.75 in)
03/19/11 19:43 CST	0	Source: Emergency Manager

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- SHALLOWATER [33.68, -101.98], 6.0 NE LUBBOCK [33.64, -101.78]

03/19/11 19:54 CST	50K	Hail (1.75 in)
03/19/11 20:18 CST	0	Source: Emergency Manager

A supercell storm moved east-northeast from Hockley County and produced large hail along a swath from Shallowater to Lubbock's Preston Smith International Airport. Numerous reports of hail as large as golfballs, and briefly larger, were received. Minor damage to vehicles was reported.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 1.0 E SHALLOWATER [33.68, -101.96]

03/19/11 19:58 CST	30K	Hail (2.75 in)
03/19/11 19:58 CST	0	Source: Public

The public reported baseball size hail just east of Shallowater shortly before 20:00 CST. One residence suffered damage when a skylight was broken by the hail. Damage to several roofs was additionally reported.

HALE COUNTY --- ABERNATHY [33.83, -101.85], 2.0 WNW PETERSBURG [33.88, -101.63]

03/19/11 21:13 CST	10K	Hail (1.00 in)
03/19/11 21:47 CST	0	Source: Storm Chaser

Storm chasers initially reported that quarter size hail had covered the ground in Abernathy at 21:13 CST. A swath of large hail accompanied the parent storm east-northeastward to near Petersburg through 21:47 CST. The Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet site northeast of Abernathy was severely damaged by the hail.

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LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 2.0 W ABERNATHY [33.83, -101.88]				
	03/19/11 21:30 CST	0		Heavy Rain
	03/19/11 22:30 CST	0		Source: Trained Spotter

Storm spotters reported that locally heavy rainfall associated with the severe storms resulted in water which briefly covered portions of Farm to Market Road 597 west of Abernathy.

FLOYD COUNTY --- FLOYDADA [33.98, -101.33]				
	03/19/11 22:20 CST	0		Hail (0.75 in)
	03/19/11 22:20 CST	0		Source: Law Enforcement

A series of three supercell thunderstorms impacted the central South Plains of west Texas during the late afternoon and evening hours of the 19th. The initial storm erupted near the intersection of a dryline and warm front over Hockley and Lubbock Counties shortly before 17:00 CST. This storm quickly became supercellular, and produced large hail and a brief tornado as it tracked east-northeastward over southern Hale and Floyd Counties. Additional supercells developed near the same surface features through the evening hours. One storm produced a swath of damaging hail over portions of Lubbock County, including near Shallowater where very large hail up to the size of baseballs was reported.



Large hail impacted Levelland (Hockley County) around 18:45 CST on the 19th. Photo courtesy: Whitney Owens - Levelland, Texas.

(TX-Z029) HALE				
	03/23/11 15:00 CST		20K	Wildfire
	03/23/11 17:00 CST		0	

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A wildfire ignited in heavy grassland fuels just east of Hale Center (Hale County) around 15:00 CST on the 23rd. Although winds were light, breezy and very dry conditions on the 22nd contributed to an enhanced curing of fuels on the 23rd. Relative humidity values around 10 percent and temperatures in the 70s helped to promote rapid fire spread in these fuels. The fire started when a resident attempted to burn a trash pile along Farm to Market Road 1914. The fire escaped in the parched fuels and destroyed two storage sheds when it ran more than 200 acres.

(TX-Z037) DICKENS

03/27/11 04:30 CST	30K	Dense Fog
03/27/11 05:00 CST	0	

A vintage 1946 Stinson 108 airplane took off from a private airfield near County Road 142 and County Road 129 in Dickens County around 04:30 CST on the 27th. The plane, with a pilot and two passengers, encountered low visibility in dense fog shortly after take-off, and attempted to return to the airfield. At about 05:00 CST, the aircraft became entangled in barbed-wire along a fence line, and nose-dived into the ground. The plane burst into flames upon impact, and all on board were killed.

The above details of the incident were provided as results of a preliminary investigation per the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Federal Aviation Administration and were widely reported in local media. Fog and low clouds were widespread over the South Plains of west Texas in the wake of a cold frontal passage during the morning hours of the 27th, with officially observed visibilities as low as three-quarters of a mile at Lubbock's Preston Smith International Airport, about 65 miles west of the incident.