

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - May 2011

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

(TX-Z021) PARMER, (TX-Z022) CASTRO, (TX-Z023) SWISHER, (TX-Z024) BRISCOE, (TX-Z025) HALL, (TX-Z026) CHILDRESS, (TX-Z027) BAILEY, (TX-Z028) LAMB, (TX-Z029) HALE, (TX-Z030) FLOYD, (TX-Z031) MOTLEY, (TX-Z032) COTTLE, (TX-Z033) COCHRAN, (TX-Z034) HOCKLEY, (TX-Z035) LUBBOCK, (TX-Z036) CROSBY, (TX-Z037) DICKENS, (TX-Z038) KING, (TX-Z039) YOAKUM, (TX-Z040) TERRY, (TX-Z041) LYNN, (TX-Z042) GARZA, (TX-Z043) KENT, (TX-Z044) STONEWALL

05/01/11 00:00 CST	50M	Drought
05/31/11 23:59 CST	0.20B	

Abnormally dry conditions that began over west Texas during the fall of 2010 persisted through May further adding to agricultural losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars. At the beginning of May, Severe (D2) drought in Briscoe and Swisher counties further intensified to Extreme (D3). The remainder of the South Plains, Rolling Plains, and southern Texas Panhandle saw additional amplification of Extreme (D3) and Exceptional (D4) drought.

Moisture typically increases through May but May, 2011 saw continued insignificant rainfall for the region. Most locations received only 10 to 25 percent of normal annual rainfall. Some locations over the southwestern South Plains received less than five percent of normal. Rainfall since November 2010 ranged from under one tenth of an inch at Plains (Yoakum County) to nearly two inches at Friona (Parmer County), Plainview (Hale County), Tulia (Swisher County) and Guthrie (King County). Most other locations around the region experienced close to an inch of rainfall during this period. These totals were about two to six inches below normal over the South Plains and six to eight inches below normal over the Rolling Plains. In addition, temperatures throughout the month of May ranged from five to eight degrees above normal. Keetch-Byram Drought Index values ranged between 600 and 700 across the region by the end of May.

The drought's impact on wildfire activity was evident during May with several large wildfires but this activity actually decreased from previous months. This wildfire activity has extended beyond the region's climatological wildfire season which typically subsides with seasonal green-up in late April and early May. Over 100,000 acres of land were burned by wildfires within the Lubbock CWA during the month of May. Agricultural losses were also becoming substantial during the month. By the end of the month, dry land fields had failed due to very dry soil conditions. Cotton crop planting continued to be delayed and was beginning to create major negative impacts across the region. Additionally, area ranchers faced livestock losses due to the worsening drought. These losses were attributed to difficulty in trucking in water and feed which resulted in the sell off of some livestock.

Economic losses due to drought through May were estimated near \$250 million.

(TX-Z021) PARMER, (TX-Z022) CASTRO, (TX-Z023) SWISHER, (TX-Z024) BRISCOE, (TX-Z027) BAILEY, (TX-Z028) LAMB, (TX-Z029) HALE, (TX-Z030) FLOYD, (TX-Z033) COCHRAN, (TX-Z034) HOCKLEY, (TX-Z035) LUBBOCK, (TX-Z036) CROSBY, (TX-Z039) YOAKUM, (TX-Z040) TERRY, (TX-Z041) LYNN

05/02/11 04:30 CST	0	Frost/Freeze
05/03/11 07:00 CST	10K	

Surface high pressure settled over the region which resulted in widespread freezing temperatures on the 3rd. Temperatures at or below freezing were observed near and west and north of a line from Tahoka (Lynn County) to Memphis (Hall County). Freezing temperatures on the 2nd were limited to the extreme southwestern Texas Panhandle.

STONEWALL COUNTY --- ASPERMONT [33.15, -100.23]

05/06/11 17:45 CST	0	Hail (0.75 in)
05/06/11 17:45 CST	0	Source: Law Enforcement

An isolated thunderstorm developed southwest of Aspermont in Stonewall County and tracked northeast. The thunderstorm produced penny size hail as it tracked through Aspermont. No damage was reported.

(TX-Z037) DICKENS, (TX-Z038) KING

05/06/11 18:00 CST	20K	Wildfire
05/11/11 18:00 CST	0	

During the evening hours on May 6, several wildfires were started by lightning strikes in Dickens County. Many of these wildfires spread and combined into a single large fire known as the Dickens Complex Fire. The wildfire was contained on May 11 after spreading into King County and burning only two sheds. The total amount of land area burned was estimated to be 90,000 acres. No injuries were reported.

PARMER COUNTY --- 2.0 NE FRIONA [34.65, -102.71]

05/11/11 00:15 CST	0	Thunderstorm Wind (MG 51 kt)
05/11/11 00:15 CST	0	Source: Mesonet

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The Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet site northeast of Friona recorded a 59 mph thunderstorm wind gust. No damage was reported.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 3.9 SSW LUBBOCK [33.53, -101.87]

05/11/11 04:10 CST			20K	Hail (1.00 in)
05/11/11 04:10 CST			0	Source: Broadcast Media

Broadcast media and a Texas Tech mesonet meteorologist reported quarter size hail around 82nd Street and University Avenue in south Lubbock. Minor car damage was reported.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 1.3 NNE DOUD [33.59, -101.92]

05/11/11 04:15 CST			0	Hail (0.75 in)
05/11/11 04:15 CST			0	Source: Trained Spotter

A NWS storm spotter reported penny size hail in west Lubbock. No damage was reported.

A complex of thunderstorms beginning late on the 10th and continuing into the early morning hours of the 11th brought much needed rainfall and a few severe weather reports. During the evening of the 10th, a dryline retreated to the Texas/New Mexico border while an upper level storm system approached from the 4-corners region. The first complex of storms began in the northwestern South Plains and moved into the Texas panhandle. A second complex of thunderstorms developed across southeastern New Mexico into the southwestern South Plains and moved east-northeast.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 4.8 W SLIDE [33.43, -101.98]

05/11/11 04:10 CST			0.12M	Lightning
05/11/11 04:10 CST			0	Source: Broadcast Media

A complex of thunderstorms during the early morning of May 11 affected portions of the South Plains. Lightning struck a southwest Lubbock home (Lubbock County) causing the home to catch fire. The home was destroyed by the fire. However, the owner, inside the home at the time, was able to evacuate before the home was destroyed. No injuries were reported.

(TX-Z022) CASTRO, (TX-Z035) LUBBOCK

05/24/11 13:48 CST			0	High Wind (MAX 51 kt)
05/24/11 14:40 CST			0	

(TX-Z023) SWISHER, (TX-Z035) LUBBOCK, (TX-Z042) GARZA

05/24/11 14:25 CST			0.11M	Wildfire
05/24/11 23:45 CST			0	

An upper level storm system moved out of the Rockies causing a surface low pressure system to strengthen over the eastern Texas panhandle. In response, strong winds spread over the West Texas region during the afternoon hours on May 24. The strong winds lead to several wind-driven grass fires as well as a couple localized high wind gusts. Reduced visibilities were reported across the region with three-quarter mile visibility reported at Lubbock International Airport at 14:53 CST.

The first high wind gust was observed at a KVII-TV Schoolnet site in Hart (Castro County). The site recorded a measured gust of 58 mph at 13:48 CST. A second severe wind gust was observed from the Texas Tech University mesonet site at Reese Center (Lubbock County). The site measured a peak gust of 59 mph at 14:40 CST which was determined to be associated with the passage of a large wind-driven wildfire.

This wildfire at Reese Center destroyed the mesonet site causing \$12,000 in damage. Additionally, as the fire passed through the mesonet site, a maximum temperature of 148 degrees Fahrenheit was recorded at 1.5 meters before the sensor failed. The fire also destroyed the anemometer at a height of 10 meters. The Lubbock County Sheriff's Office closed roads near this wildfire due to low visibility within the smoke along with evacuating 30 to 50 residences. This fire burned a total of 1200 acres before being contained at 17:00 CST.

Another wildfire started shortly after the Reese Center fire at 14:45 CST in Garza County ten miles northeast of Post. This wildfire burned 3000 acres before it was contained during the late evening hours. No injuries or property damage were reported. A third wildfire began five miles west of Tulia in Swisher County. Interstate 27 in Swisher County was briefly closed due to low visibility within dense smoke. This wildfire burned 1500 acres before being contained around 21:00 CST. No injuries or property damage were reported.

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Damage to the Reese Center Texas Tech University West Texas mesonet station. Photograph taken by Jeff Livingston of Texas Tech University.

(TX-Z029) HALE

05/25/11 16:30 CST	5K	Wildfire
05/25/11 19:00 CST	0	

Strong winds continued during the day on May 25th. A wildfire developed two miles northeast of Hale Center (Hale County) at 16:30 CST and was contained at 20:00 CST. The wildfire burned approximately 300 acres and destroyed one abandoned structure. Additionally, Interstate 27 was briefly closed between mile markers 36 and 43.

CROSBY COUNTY --- RALLS [33.68, -101.38]

05/30/11 22:35 CST	0	Hail (1.00 in)
05/30/11 22:35 CST	0	Source: Public

Broadcast media relayed a public report of quarter size hail in Ralls. No damage was reported.

CHILDRESS COUNTY --- 3.0 S TELL [34.33, -100.38]

05/30/11 23:05 CST	0	Hail (1.75 in)
05/30/11 23:05 CST	0	Source: COOP Observer

A NWS co-op observer reported numerous nickel sized hail stones mixed with a few golf ball sized hail stones. No damage was reported.

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MOTLEY COUNTY --- MATADOR [34.02, -100.82]				
	05/30/11 23:17 CST		0	Hail (1.75 in)
	05/30/11 23:17 CST		0	Source: Public
Broadcast media relayed a public report of golf ball sized hail in Matador. No damage was reported.				
CHILDRESS COUNTY --- 0.5 SSW CHILDRESS [34.41, -100.20]				
	05/31/11 00:00 CST		0	Hail (1.00 in)
	05/31/11 00:05 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement
Childress police reported quarter size hail on the south side of town. No damage was reported.				
CROSBY COUNTY --- 6.0 ESE CROSBYTON [33.64, -101.15]				
	05/31/11 00:00 CST		3K	Hail (1.75 in)
	05/31/11 00:05 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement
Law enforcement reported a few golf ball sized hail stones. There was partial damage to a law enforcement vehicle.				
<p>A complex of thunderstorms developed late in the evening on the 30th and continued into the early morning hours of the 31st. Thunderstorms initially developed around 22:00 CST along a weak cold front extending from the extreme southeastern Texas panhandle to the south-central South Plains. Many of these thunderstorms became severe as they continued to intensify while the storms moved to the northeast. After midnight CST on the 31st, thunderstorms began to weaken and moved east of the Rolling Plains.</p>				
COCHRAN COUNTY --- 5.0 SW MORTON [33.67, -102.83]				
	05/31/11 18:05 CST		0	Hail (1.00 in)
	05/31/11 18:10 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement
The Cochran County sheriff's office reported quarter size hail southwest of Morton. No damage was reported.				
COCHRAN COUNTY --- 0.5 ESE BLEDSOE [33.62, -103.01]				
	05/31/11 18:25 CST		0	Hail (1.75 in)
	05/31/11 18:25 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement
The Cochran County sheriff's office reported golf ball size hail near Bledsoe. No damage was reported.				
COCHRAN COUNTY --- 5.0 S MORTON [33.65, -102.77], 3.0 E LEHMAN [33.62, -102.75]				
	05/31/11 18:46 CST		0	Hail (2.50 in)
	05/31/11 19:01 CST		0	Source: Broadcast Media
Local broadcast media and a trained spotter reported very large hail up to the size of tennis balls south of Morton. No damage was reported.				
HOCKLEY COUNTY --- 6.0 NNW ROPESVILLE [33.50, -102.19]				
	05/31/11 19:01 CST		0	Hail (0.88 in)
	05/31/11 19:01 CST		0	Source: Trained Spotter
A Texas Tech University mesonet meteorologist reported pea sized hail covering the ground along with some nickel sized hail.				
HOCKLEY COUNTY --- SMYER [33.58, -102.17]				
	05/31/11 19:15 CST		0	Hail (2.00 in)
	05/31/11 19:15 CST		0	Source: Trained Spotter
A trained spotter in Smyer reported very large two inch hail. No damage was reported.				
HALL COUNTY --- MEMPHIS [34.72, -100.53], 5.0 WSW MEMPHIS [34.69, -100.61]				
	05/31/11 20:19 CST		0	Hail (1.75 in)
	05/31/11 20:30 CST		0	Source: Trained Spotter
A trained spotter, local broadcast media, and Texas Department of Transportation employees all reported hail ranging from quarter to golf ball size from southwest of Memphis to Memphis. No damage was reported.				
PARMER COUNTY --- BOVINA [34.52, -102.90]				

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	05/31/11 21:05 CST		0	Hail (1.00 in)
	05/31/11 21:10 CST		0	Source: Emergency Manager

The Parmer County emergency manager and the Bovina police department reported nickel to quarter size hail in Bovina. No damage was reported.

SWISHER COUNTY --- 10.0 E KRESS [34.37, -101.57]

05/31/11 22:05 CST	5K	Thunderstorm Wind (EG 50 kt)
05/31/11 22:05 CST	0	Source: Public

The public reported that a barn was destroyed by thunderstorm outflow winds near Claytonville.

MOTLEY COUNTY --- 7.0 ENE FLOMOT [34.26, -100.87]

05/31/11 23:40 CST	0	Hail (1.75 in)
05/31/11 23:40 CST	0	Source: Public

The public reported golf ball size hail north of Matador. No damage was reported.

A cold front which aided in thunderstorm development during the late evening hours on the 30th into the early morning hours of the 31st stalled and retreated during the day on the 31st. This front in addition to a passing upper level disturbance led to additional thunderstorm development during the evening of the 31st. Scattered thunderstorms initially developed over the western and southwestern South Plains while two additional thunderstorm complexes developed over Hall County and over the extreme southwestern Texas Panhandle.



Very large hail near the city of Morton at 1846 CST. Photograph was relayed by KCBD-TV in Lubbock.

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