

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - February 2012

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-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

02/01/12 00:00 CST	2.50M	Drought
02/29/12 23:59 CST	2.50M	

Drought conditions as reflected by the U.S. Drought Monitor were unchanged from the end of January. Exceptional (D4) drought persisted over much of the South Plains while the Rolling Plains saw values ranging from Abnormally Dry (D0) in Hall County to Severe (D3).

February was abnormally cool for a typical La Niña pattern that had been observed through the fall and winter. Average temperatures for the month at Lubbock and Childress were just below normal. These lower temperatures greatly reduced instances of grassland wildfire starts. The first half of February brought mostly dry conditions but two widespread precipitation events occurred in the second half of the month in the form of winter weather. Despite these two precipitation events, much of the area was below normal for precipitation totals. Keetch-Byram Drought Index values remained unchanged from January. Values ranged from 500-600 across the South Plains and 300-400 across the Rolling Plains.

Soil moisture deficits experienced modest improvements by mid-month after a few rounds of precipitation. However, deep soil moisture levels were not improved. A strong wind event on the 20th damaged some winter wheat crops in the Rolling Plains due to widespread blowing dust. Livestock was generally reported to be in fair to good condition with a continued dependence on supplemental feed.

Economic losses due to drought through February since the drought began were estimated near \$2.4 billion.

CASTRO COUNTY --- DIMMITT [34.55, -102.32]

02/02/12 21:58 CST	0	Hail (1.00 in)
02/02/12 21:58 CST	0	Source: Public

KVII-TV relayed a public report of hail up to the size of quarters in Dimmitt. No damage was reported.

A line of thunderstorms developed late in the evening on the second across the southwestern Texas panhandle into the northwestern South Plains. Part of this line became severe as it passed over Dimmitt (Castro County). The line of thunderstorms weakened as it moved east into the south-central Texas panhandle.

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

02/12/12 07:00 CST	0.91M	Winter Weather
02/12/12 23:00 CST	0	

(TX-Z025) HALL, (TX-Z026) CHILDRESS, (TX-Z030) FLOYD, (TX-Z031) MOTLEY, (TX-Z036) CROSBY

02/12/12 13:00 CST	15K	Winter Storm
02/12/12 23:00 CST	0	

An upper level storm system pushed from the Great Basin through the central Rockies and onto the Southern Plains on the 12th. Relatively warm and moist air overspread a low level arctic airmass entrenched across West Texas. This system brought widespread significant snowfall to the region throughout the entire day. Snow and sleet showers began over the western South Plains during the pre-dawn hours. Snowfall then spread to the rest of the South Plains by the rest of the morning and then to the Rolling Plains by the mid-afternoon. Several brief and scattered heavy snow showers brought up to one inch per hour snowfall rates during the afternoon and evening. Most snow tapered off late in the evening but light freezing drizzle and sleet persisted into the early morning hours of the 13th. Numerous traffic accidents were reported throughout the region with a majority of incidents occurring in Lubbock.

Snowfall totals are as follows from NWS Cooperative Weather Observers:

Childress (Childress County)...5.0 inches, Memphis (Hall County)...5.0 inches, Turkey (Hall County)...4.0 inches, Crosbyton (Crosby County)...4.0 inches, Floydada (Floyd County)...4.0 inches, Matador (Motley County)...4.0 inches, Guthrie (King County)...3.5 inches, Abernathy (Hale County)...3.0 inches, Hart (Castro County)...3.0 inches, Jayton (Kent County)...3.0 inches, Muleshoe (Bailey County)...3.0 inches, Olton (Lamb County)...3.0 inches, Silverton (Briscoe County)...3.0 inches, Tahoka (Lynn County)...3.0 inches, Vigo Park (Swisher County)...3.0 inches, Levelland (Hockley County)...2.8 inches, Lubbock (Lubbock County)...2.8 inches, Brownfield (Terry County)...2.5

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inches, Friona (Parmer County)...2.5 inches, Lake Alan Henry (Garza County)...2.5 inches, Paducah (Cottle County)...2.5 inches, White River Lake (Crosby County)...2.5 inches, Plainview (Hale County)...2.2 inches, Dimmitt (Castro County)...2.0 inches, Littlefield (Lamb County)...2.0 inches, Post (Garza County)...2.0 inches, Spur (Dickens County)...2.0 inches, Tulia (Swisher County)...2.0 inches, Aspermont (Stonewall County)...1.5 inches, Denver City (Yoakum County)...1.0 inch, Morton (Cochran County)...1.0 inch, and Plains (Yoakum County)...1.0 inch.				

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02/20/12 10:15 CST			15K	High Wind (MAX 55 kt)
02/20/12 15:10 CST	1		0	

(TX-Z025) HALL

02/20/12 14:30 CST			0.15M	Dust Storm
02/20/12 15:15 CST			0	

A strong upper level storm system moved across the Southern Plains on the 20th. This system produced high winds and blowing dust over much of West Texas. The highest winds were observed across the extreme southern Texas panhandle into the northern South Plains. Wind speeds increased late in the morning and quickly subsided late in the afternoon as the storm system moved east of the region. Several accidents were reported due to the high winds. A tractor trailer was blown over on Interstate 27 in Lubbock County just north of Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport. The driver was taken to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries. An additional tractor trailer blew off the road in Hockley County on Farm to Market road 2130.

Near zero visibilities due to blowing dust caused an 11 vehicle accident in Hall County, three miles north of Estelline on US Highway 287. Two vans, four passenger vehicles and five tractor trailers were involved in this wreck with four injuries reported.

A list of severe wind gusts measured by the Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet and Automated Surface Observing Systems follows:

Silverton (Briscoe County)...63 mph, Hart (Castro County)...61 mph, Ralls (Crosby County)...60 mph, Roaring Springs (Motley County)...59 mph, Turkey (Hall County)...59 mph, Abernathy (Hale County)...59 mph, Olton (Lamb County)...59 mph, Dimmitt (Castro County)...58 mph, Floydada (Floyd County)...58 mph, Morton (Cochran County)...58 mph.

A list of maximum sustained severe winds measured by the Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet follows:

Friona (Parmer County)...44 mph, Anton (Hockley County)...44 mph, Wolfforth (Lubbock County)...43 mph, Tulia (Swisher County)...42 mph, Muleshoe (Bailey County)...42 mph, Plains (Yoakum County)...40 mph.

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Photograph of an overturned tractor trailer on Interstate 27 in Lubbock County. Photo courtesy KCBD-TV.

(TX-Z035) LUBBOCK

02/27/12 21:00 CST	20K	Dense Fog
02/28/12 03:00 CST	0	

Late in the evening of the 27th, dense fog formed across the South Plains of West Texas. Shortly after visibilities dropped below 1/4 mile, two vehicle accidents were reported in Lubbock County. One accident was the result of a head on collision while the second accident involved a vehicle running off the road. Three injuries resulted from these vehicle accidents.

(TX-Z027) BAILEY, (TX-Z034) HOCKLEY, (TX-Z035) LUBBOCK, (TX-Z039) YOAKUM, (TX-Z040) TERRY

02/28/12 11:30 CST	0	High Wind (MAX 52 kt)
02/28/12 17:15 CST	0	

(TX-Z028) LAMB

02/28/12 15:15 CST	0	Wildfire
02/28/12 18:00 CST	0	

During the afternoon of the 28th, a strong upper level storm system moved out of the central Rockies onto the central High Plains. This system caused widespread strong winds across West Texas with a few severe wind gusts on the South Plains. The strong winds also caused a wildfire to rapidly spread beginning at 1515 CST. The wildfire was located in Lamb County four miles south of Sudan and was contained by 1800 CST. About 375 acres were burned although no significant damage occurred with this wildfire.

A list of severe wind gusts measured by the Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet follows:

60 mph at Brownfield (Terry County), 59 mph at Muleshoe (Bailey County), 58 mph at Plains (Yoakum County), 58 mph at Wolfforth (Lubbock County), and 58 mph at Anton (Hockley County).