

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - May 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-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	05/01/12 00:00 CST	0	0	Drought
	05/31/12 23:59 CST		5M	

Overall drought conditions were reduced through the month of May. A few small areas of exceptional (D4) drought existed over the central South Plains and Rolling Plains with values ranging from moderate (D1) to extreme (D3) elsewhere. By the end of the month, Hall County was included in D1 conditions along with Childress County. Temperatures were generally above normal with more mixed results regarding precipitation.

The first half of the month began wet and cool but this quickly changed during the second half of the month. Several maximum temperature records were set toward the end of the month. May ended above normal in terms of temperatures but was not as extreme as observed temperatures in April. Lubbock and Childress were 3.4 and 5.3 degrees above normal compared to average temperatures, respectively. Beneficial rainfall early in the month increased the likelihood of a weakening drought but widespread rainfall was not observed during the second half of the month. Rainfall was generally scattered over the entire South Plains and Rolling Plains and most areas remained below normal for precipitation amounts. Some selected totals include 3.23" at Denver City, 3.20" at Dimmitt, 2.94" at Childress, 1.36" at Lubbock, and 0.56" at Abernathy. Keetch-Byram Drought Index values were highest over the southeast panhandle at 600 to 700. The lowest values were observed over the southern Rolling Plains and ranged from 300-400. Elsewhere values ranged from 400 to 600.

The drought continued to ease, meteorologically, but rainfall was still needed for water supply and agriculture needs. Additional rainfall was needed to deepen the soil moisture for farmers with irrigation not sufficient enough to provide all of the water needs for crops. Winter wheat had all been harvested early with generally low yields. Several days of high based thunderstorms with little rain but strong winds led to several small grass fires near the end of the month.

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

KENT COUNTY --- 4.7 W GIRARD [33.36, -100.75]

05/02/12 18:35 CST	0	0	Hail (1.75 in)
05/02/12 18:35 CST	0		Source: Public

The public estimated golfball size hail 5W Girard. No damage was reported.

A few high-based thunderstorms developed along the dryline in the southern Rolling Plains early this evening. One storm became severe and produced large hail in northern Kent County.

STONEWALL COUNTY --- 0.9 SE ASPERMONT [33.14, -100.22]

05/03/12 18:25 CST	0	0	Hail (1.75 in)
05/03/12 18:25 CST	0		Source: Law Enforcement

Law enforcement in Aspermont estimated golfball size hail. No damage was reported.

Early this evening, a cluster of thunderstorms developed in eastern Stonewall County along a dryline. Strong instability and turning winds with height allowed one of these storms to quickly become a supercell over Aspermont where large hail was observed. This supercell later split with the right mover tracking east and the left mover passing over northeast Stonewall and southeast King Counties. While likely still dropping large hail, no further reports of severe weather were received with these storms due to the sparse population density.

TERRY COUNTY --- BROWNFIELD [33.18, -102.28]

05/11/12 13:20 CST	0	0	Funnel Cloud
05/11/12 13:20 CST	0		Source: Emergency Manager

The Brownfield Emergency Manager relayed several reports of funnel clouds in the Brownfield area.

TERRY COUNTY --- MEADOW [33.33, -102.20]

05/11/12 13:20 CST	0	0	Funnel Cloud
05/11/12 13:20 CST	0		Source: Emergency Manager

The Brownfield Emergency Manager relayed a report of a funnel cloud near Meadow.

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LYNN COUNTY --- 9.0 E WILSON [33.32, -101.57]				
	05/11/12 14:02 CST		0	Funnel Cloud
	05/11/12 14:02 CST		0	Source: Unknown

A funnel cloud was reported along the Lynn and Garza County line east of Wilson.

LUBBOCK COUNTY --- 7.0 S WOLFFORTH [33.40, -102.03]				
	05/11/12 14:28 CST		0	Funnel Cloud
	05/11/12 14:28 CST		0	Source: Public

A resident observed and photographed a tall funnel cloud near Farm to Market 179 and Farm to Market 41 in extreme southwest Lubbock County. There was no evidence the funnel became tornadic.

HALE COUNTY --- 6.0 W PETERSBURG [33.87, -101.70]				
	05/11/12 15:10 CST		0	Funnel Cloud
	05/11/12 15:10 CST		0	Source: Broadcast Media

A funnel cloud was observed and photographed west of Petersburg.

A slow-moving upper low moved northeast from the Permian Basin into Northwest Texas this afternoon. Although surface temperatures were unseasonably cool, relatively cold air aloft with this low resulted in scattered to numerous showers by early afternoon; some of which produced funnel clouds over the southern South Plains. Numerous photos of these funnels were taken by area residents with no definitive evidence of any becoming tornadic.

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A tall funnel cloud looms over extreme southwest Lubbock County. Photo courtesy KCBD news.

(TX-Z028) LAMB

05/17/12 19:20 CST	0	High Wind (MAX 60 kt)
05/17/12 19:20 CST	0	

Isolated thunderstorms developed in association with an upper level short wave that moved across the region during the afternoon and evening of the 17th. A wake low developed with one of these thunderstorms and produced a wind gust to 69 mph at a Texas Tech University West Texas mesonet site one mile northeast of Amherst (Lamb County). No damage was reported.

KING COUNTY --- 4.1 SSE GUTHRIE [33.56, -100.31], 5.0 SSE GUTHRIE [33.55, -100.31]

05/20/12 16:53 CST	0	Hail (2.50 in)
05/20/12 17:00 CST	0	Source: Storm Chaser

A storm chaser reported a swath of tennis ball size hail along U.S. Highway 83 south of Guthrie. No damage was reported.

On the morning of the 20th, a cold front stalled out across the southern South Plains and Rolling Plains. During the evening, an isolated supercell developed along this boundary over central King County and slowly moved east. During its lifetime, this storm produced hail up to the size of tennis balls along U.S. Highway 83 south of Guthrie.



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Tennis ball size hail observed along U.S. Highway 83 south of Guthrie. Photograph taken by Markus Pfister.

(TX-Z029) HALE

	05/25/12 15:40 CST		0	High Wind (MAX 52 kt)
	05/25/12 15:40 CST		0	

An upper level trough moved northeast over the South Plains this afternoon and combined with mid-level moisture and instability to produce extensive virga over the region. Some of this virga produced a severe wind gust to 60 mph in southeast Hale County.

(TX-Z034) HOCKLEY

	05/27/12 00:35 CST		0	High Wind (MAX 56 kt)
	05/27/12 00:35 CST		0	

A small band of showers began decaying in the extreme southwest South Plains shortly after midnight CST. High winds from a developing wake low proceeded to spread north and a few Texas Tech Mesonet stations recorded sustained winds of 40 mph for up to 15 minutes in duration. During this time, a mesonet station in southwest Hockley County recorded a wind gust to 65 mph.

HALL COUNTY --- 2.7 ESE ELI [34.66, -100.58]

	05/30/12 15:25 CST		15K	Thunderstorm Wind (EG 70 kt)
	05/30/12 15:25 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement

Law enforcement reported thunderstorm wind damage in and near the community of Plaska. Reports consisted of damage to barns, downed power lines, a few trailers blown over, and a roof removed from a home. A NWS storm survey was unable to reach this area to determine the full extent of damage, however a storm chaser in the area did report frequent inflow wind gusts to at least 60 mph into a nearby supercell thunderstorm. It is unclear if the damage was the result of inflow or outflow winds, or a combination thereof. Property damage was estimated to be around \$15 thousand.

HALL COUNTY --- 3.1 NW NEWLIN [34.61, -100.47]

	05/30/12 15:36 CST		0	Hail (2.00 in)
	05/30/12 15:36 CST		0	Source: Storm Chaser

A storm chaser estimated hen egg size hail 5NNW Estelline. No damage was reported.

CHILDRESS COUNTY --- 3.5 ESE TELL [34.36, -100.32]

	05/30/12 15:53 CST		0	Hail (0.88 in)
	05/30/12 15:53 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

An NWS employee estimated nickel size hail 6SW Childress falling from a supercell in northwest Cottle County. No damage occurred.

HALL COUNTY --- 0.7 S ESTELLINE [34.54, -100.43]

	05/30/12 16:20 CST		0	Hail (1.75 in)
	05/30/12 16:20 CST		0	Source: Law Enforcement

Law enforcement estimated golfball size hail on US Highway 287 near the Hall and Childress County line. No damage was reported.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 4.2 N DUNLAP [34.19, -100.30], 4.1 WSW OGDEN [34.05, -100.19]

	05/30/12 16:22 CST		0.40K	Hail (4.50 in)
	05/30/12 16:58 CST		0	Source: Fire Department/Rescue

A hailswath occurred from 8N Paducah to about 6NE Paducah. Large and even giant hail to the size of softballs was witnessed by Paducah fire department personnel and an off-duty NWS employee. These giant hailstones fell about 50 feet apart from each thereby limiting the extent of damage. However, one motorist, while stopping to change a flat tire north of Paducah, reported damage after a hailstone of at least tennis ball size cracked their windshield.

CHILDRESS COUNTY --- 2.8 SSE (CDS)CHILDRESS ARPT [34.39, -100.29]

	05/30/12 16:42 CST		0	Hail (1.00 in)
	05/30/12 16:42 CST		0	Source: Emergency Manager

The Childress Emergency Manager relayed a report of quarter size hail at the prison 3SW of Childress. No damage was reported.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 0.6 SSW PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.01, -100.28], 1.3 SSW PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.00, -100.29]

	05/30/12 16:55 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.69 mi , W: 30 yd)
	05/30/12 16:58 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

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An off-duty NWS employee observed a non-mesocyclonic tornado attached to the flanking line of a supercell. The tornado was a cylindrical column of dirt and moved slowly SSW over an open field causing no damage.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 4.8 NE PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.07, -100.22], 1.6 SSW PADUCAH [34.00, -100.31]

	05/30/12 16:55 CST		0.50M	Thunderstorm Wind (EG 78 kt)
	05/30/12 16:56 CST		0	Source: NWS Storm Survey

Destructive straight-line winds spread south-southwest in the rear flank downdraft of a supercell creating scattered to widespread damage in and around the city of Paducah. These winds caused a swath of damage to trees, power lines, homes, vehicles, and other buildings from about 4NE Paducah southwest to the south side of the city. An NWS storm survey indicated winds up to 100 mph partially swept away a multi-car garage and overturned one car in the process. Three other vehicles inside suffered various degrees of damage. Sheet metal from the garage was found to be blown southwest nearly 300 yards from its origin. On the north side of Paducah, a portion of a large warehouse collapsed from straight line winds of similar intensity. Several vehicles in Paducah had windows blown out by airborne gravel and other small debris. Fortunately, no injuries were reported as residents received ample warning to seek shelter.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 1.3 S PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.00, -100.28], 1.7 S PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.00, -100.29]

	05/30/12 16:59 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.38 mi , W: 30 yd)
	05/30/12 17:02 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

An off-duty NWS employee observed a second non-mesocyclonic tornado under the flanking line of a supercell. The tornado was a cylindrical column of dirt and moved slowly SSW over an open field causing no damage.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 1.3 S PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.00, -100.28], 1.6 S PADUCAH RICHARDS ARP [34.00, -100.28]

	05/30/12 17:00 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.32 mi , W: 20 yd)
	05/30/12 17:02 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

An off-duty NWS employee observed a third non-mesocyclonic tornado attached to the flanking line of a supercell. The tornado was a cylindrical column of dirt and moved slowly south over an open field causing no damage.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 3.9 S PADUCAH [33.96, -100.30], 4.5 S PADUCAH [33.96, -100.29]

	05/30/12 17:13 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.56 mi , W: 30 yd)
	05/30/12 17:15 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

Multiple storm chasers including two off-duty NWS employees observed a non-mesocyclonic rope tornado about four miles south-southeast of Paducah. The tornado remained over open land and caused no known damage.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 2.9 NNE NARCISSO [34.04, -100.45], 2.8 SE NARCISSO [33.97, -100.43]

	05/30/12 18:14 CST		0	Tornado (EF0, L: 4.77 mi , W: 200 yd)
	05/30/12 18:17 CST		0	Source: NWS Employee

An off-duty NWS employee documented a partially rain-wrapped tornado move south-southeast over US Highway 70 about 9W Paducah. The initially large cone tornado was largely obscured in rain curtains before later emerging and shrinking in girth. Aside from crossing the highway, the tornado remained over open land. A NWS storm survey the following day revealed no damage.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 6.6 SSE NARCISSO [33.91, -100.43]

	05/30/12 18:15 CST		0	Thunderstorm Wind (MG 65 kt)
	05/30/12 18:15 CST		0	Source: Mesonet

A Texas Tech University West Texas Mesonet station located 10SW Paducah measured periodic severe wind gusts throughout a 20-minute period as a supercell storm moved over the site. The following observations indicate severe winds initially in the inflow sector of the supercell before transitioning to rear flank downdraft winds:

615 PM: East at 40 MPH, Gust to 59 MPH /
 620 PM: East at 43 MPH, Gust to 59 MPH /
 630 PM: Northwest at 39 MPH, Gust to 75 MPH /
 635 PM: North-Northwest at 51 MPH, Gust to 70 MPH.

COTTLE COUNTY --- 5.0 W PADUCAH [34.02, -100.39], 10.0 S PADUCAH [33.88, -100.30]

	05/30/12 18:20 CST		0	Hail (4.50 in)
	05/30/12 18:32 CST		0	Source: Fire Department/Rescue

The Paducah Fire Department estimated a swath of baseball to softball size hail from 5W Paducah to 10S Paducah. No reports of damage were received.

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KING COUNTY --- 1.3 ESE GROW [33.81, -100.30], 15.6 E GUTHRIE [33.63, -100.06]				
	05/30/12 18:43 CST		0	Hail (2.75 in)
	05/30/12 19:19 CST		0	Source: COOP Observer

A right-moving supercell produced a swath of large hail at times as large as baseballs from Grow southeast to 15E Guthrie along US Highway 82. The largest hail was estimated by a NWS Cooperative Observer in Grow; however, no reports of damage were received with this hailswath.

KING COUNTY --- 0.9 NE GUTHRIE [33.63, -100.32]				
	05/30/12 18:55 CST		20K	Hail (2.75 in)
	05/30/12 18:57 CST		0	Source: Storm Chaser

Storm chasers in Guthrie documented large hail that grew to baseball size over the course of about two minutes as a mesocyclone tracked just north and east of the city. Although some of this hail did damage building roofs and vehicles, the majority of the damage in the city was caused by destructive straight-line winds that developed shortly after the hail ended.

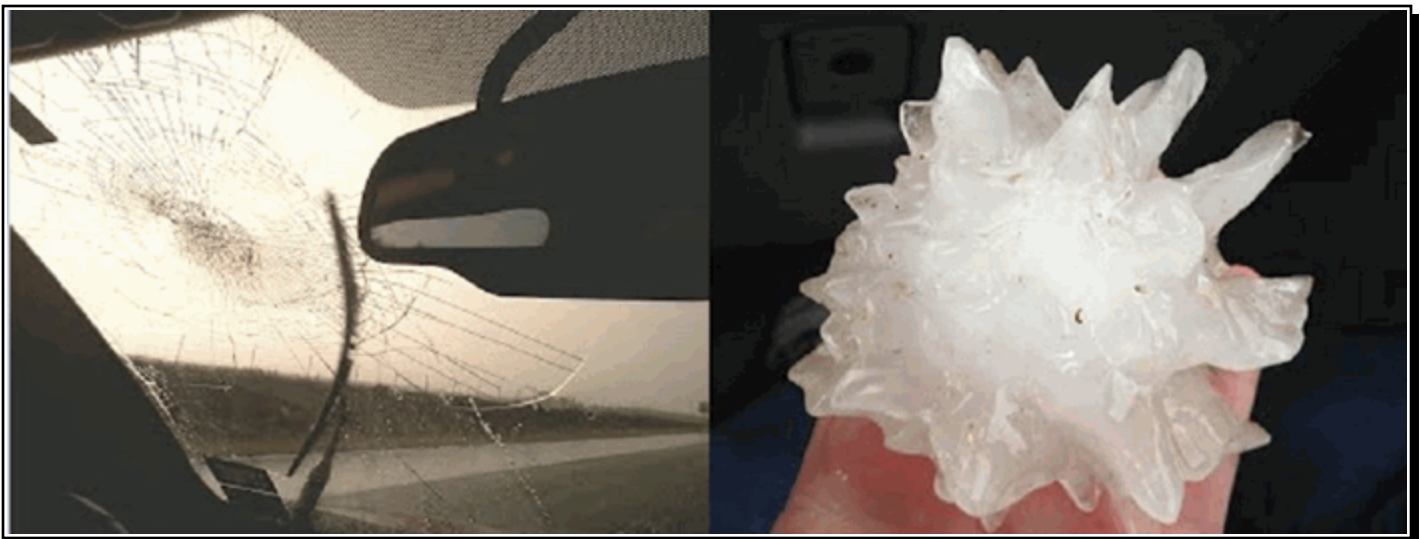
KING COUNTY --- GUTHRIE [33.62, -100.33]				
	05/30/12 18:57 CST		0.35M	Thunderstorm Wind (EG 78 kt)
	05/30/12 19:00 CST		0	Source: Storm Chaser

Multiple storm chasers reported scattered to widespread wind damage in the city of Guthrie from intense rear flank downdraft winds estimated near 90 mph. Several roofs in the city suffered various degrees of damage, with at least one roof partially blown off. A large equipment garage had several bay doors blown out. The intense winds developed shortly after large hail up to baseball size ceased falling. Many large tree limbs were broken in and around the city. Conservative property damage estimates may exceed \$350 thousand.

Very strong instability and ample wind shear created a volatile airmass in the eastern Panhandle and Rolling Plains on the afternoon and evening of the 30th. A weak surface low moved into the northeast South Plains early in the afternoon and enhanced lift along a sharp dryline and residual outflow boundary. By mid-afternoon, a pair of thunderstorms erupted in Hall and Motley Counties and quickly became supercells while moving to the east and southeast. These storms produced very large and even giant hail at times and were accompanied by intense inflow and outflow wind gusts at or above 60 mph.

The second of these supercells produced several gustnadoes and at least four weak, non-mesocyclonic tornadoes under its flanking line as it moved through central Cottle County. However, all of the damage in and around the Paducah area was attributed to ferocious winds in the rear flank downdraft (RFD) of this supercell. Although NWS radars from both Lubbock, TX and Frederick, OK indicated a high probability of a significant tornado in far eastern Cottle County from this same storm, a NWS storm survey found no such evidence despite a large tornado having occurred a short while later in nearby western Foard County.

By early evening, a third supercell developed northwest of Paducah and tracked south-southeast into King County. This storm produced a weak tornado about nine miles west of Paducah that moved over open land before crossing Highway 70 and dissipating. While in King County, this supercell produced scattered to widespread structural and tree damage in Guthrie from intense RFD winds estimated to be at least 80 mph.



Left: A hailstone of at least 2.5 inches in diameter cracked a motorist's windshield north of Paducah. Right: A 3.5 inch diameter hailstone that fell near Paducah. Photos courtesy of KFDA News.

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