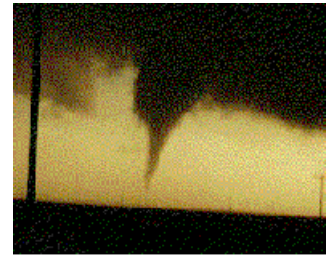




The West Texas

TWISTER



SPRING 1997 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE FORECAST OFFICE LUBBOCK TEXAS

Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas: March 2-8, 1997

The week of March 2-8 has been designated as "Severe Weather Awareness Week" in the state of Texas. The National Weather Service, along with the DPS's Division of Emergency Management, the Red Cross, and others, will work to help people prepare for the upcoming severe weather season. NWS employees from the Lubbock office will be at South Plains Mall Tuesday through Saturday during Severe Weather Awareness Week to provide severe weather safety tips.

Another Quiet Spring??

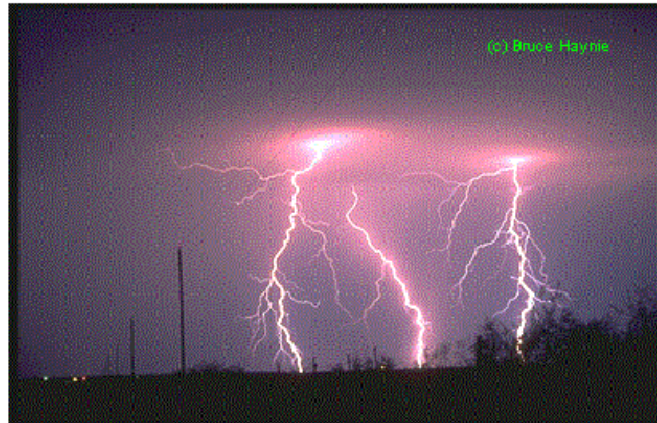


Photo courtesy of Bruce Haynie

The past two severe weather seasons have been quite different from each other and a "normal" spring has eluded West Texas during the 1995 and 1996 seasons. 1995 turned out to be one of the most active seasons in quite a few years with numerous tornadoes across the Panhandle and northern South Plains. Most notable of these were the Dimmitt and Friona tornadoes, and the Floyd County storm (Dougherty tornado). On the other hand, last spring was quieter in terms of the number of severe weather days. What will this year bring?

The long term climate computer models are suggesting a near "normal" period for April, May, and June of this year, in terms of rainfall and temperature.

(Continued on next page)

SPOTTER TRAINING

underway on the South Plains and southern Panhandle

The time is here for severe weather preparedness and spotter training. We here at NWSFO Lubbock have revamped the slide and video presentation and have begun our trek across the South Plains and southern Panhandle to prepare for whatever Mother Nature has in store for us during the upcoming months. On Page 2 of this newsletter is a listing of the spotter training sites and dates during February, March and April. If you wish to attend, contact our office or the local agency that is hosting the training session (usually the local fire department).

What's In This Edition...

Spring Weather Outlook

Spotter Training Sites/Dates

Final 1996 Precip. Stats

Severe Weather Awareness Week

Tornado Safety

Crossword Puzzle



Spotter Training Sites/Dates 1997

National Weather Service Lubbock - 1997 Spotter Training Sessions

(sites/dates subject to change)

February	10	Aspermont FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	12	**Guthrie Community Center	7:00-9:00 PM
	13	**Paducah FD	7:30-9:30 PM
	17	Matador FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	20	Jayton Community Center	7:00-9:00 PM
	24	Dickens Senior Center	7:00-9:00 PM
	25	Quitaque FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	27	Plainview PD	3:00-5:00 PM
March	3	Tahoka FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	10	Floydada FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	11	Tulia Correctional Facility	9:00-11:00AM & 1:00-3:00 PM
	11	Levelland Law Enforc.Bldg.	7:00-9:00 PM
	13	Friona FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	17	Morton FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	24	Crosbyton FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	25	Denver City FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	27	Post FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	31	Littlefield FD	7:00-9:00 PM
April	1	Wolfforth (location T.B.A)	7:00-9:00 PM
	2	Muleshoe FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	14	Memphis FD	7:30-9:30 PM
	15	Childress Courthouse	7:00-9:00 PM
	17	Dimmitt FD	7:00-9:00 PM
	28	Shallowater FD	7:00-9:00 PM



"Another Quiet Spring? (Continued from Page 1)

What this says about the volatility of the upcoming severe weather season is not clear. The rainfall in Lubbock has been below normal since Oct. 1st of last year running about 30 percent of normal. However, "normal" weather conditions are really just averages and the weather, as we all know, is highly variable in West Texas.

One factor that favors increased rainfall this year is the absence of the "La Nina" phenomenon. The La Nina is a condition in which the equatorial waters of the Eastern Pacific are unusually cool. This occurrence has been correlated with a dry spring in the Southern Plains states. Some of the heavier rains last year came toward early summer, when the La Nina phenomenon was weakening.

As of early February, the soil moisture profiles according to the Palmer Drought index were close to normal despite the lack of recent significant rainfall.

National Weather Service Booth at South Plains Mall

The National Weather Service will staff a severe weather booth and display at Lubbock's South Plains Mall from Tuesday, March 4 through Saturday, March 8. Our booth will be open during South Plains Mall's normal operating hours of 10 AM - 9 PM each day for the purpose of promoting severe weather safety. Come on out to see us!

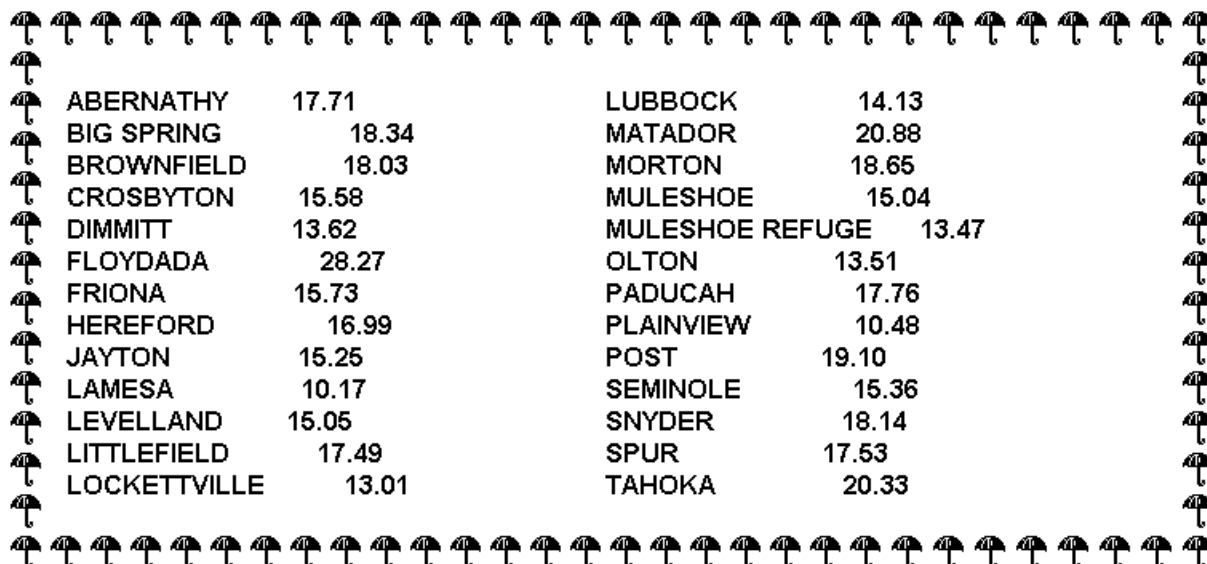
Watch exciting tornado videos!
Pick up free brochures about
tornadoes lightning, thunder
storms, and flash floods! Bounce
your toughest weather questions
off our weather experts! Put your
name in a drawing for a free
NWS Rain Gage.

We look forward to meeting you during
Severe Weather Awareness Week.

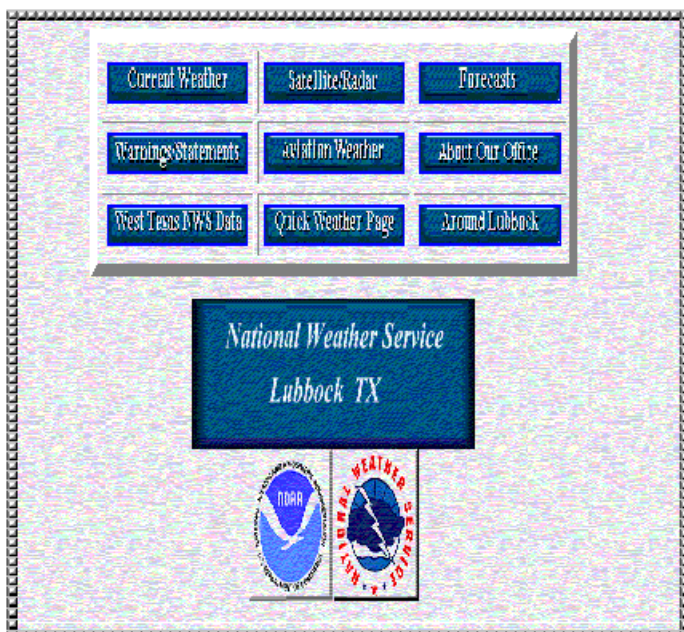
1996 Rainfall Quite Variable

After a very dry spring, in which some locations on the South Plains were up to 6 inches below normal in total rainfall, a wet summer helped to relieve the drought. However, slightly drier than normal conditions were experienced across the South Plains during the 1996 calendar year. Precipitation totals varied considerably and ranged from 10.17 inches at Lamesa to 28.27 inches at Floydada. The average annual precipitation across the South Plains is 19.30 inches. The 1996 average was 16.67 inches, which is 86% of normal.

Listed below are the 1996 annual totals for selected cities across the South Plains. Most of the totals were furnished by NWS Cooperative Observers. Thanks to them for their help throughout the year!



ABERNATHY	17.71	LUBBOCK	14.13
BIG SPRING	18.34	MATADOR	20.88
BROWNFIELD	18.03	MORTON	18.65
CROSBYTON	15.58	MULESHOE	15.04
DIMMITT	13.62	MULESHOE REFUGE	13.47
FLOYDADA	28.27	OLTON	13.51
FRIONA	15.73	PADUCAH	17.76
HEREFORD	16.99	PLAINVIEW	10.48
JAYTON	15.25	POST	19.10
LAMESA	10.17	SEMINOLE	15.36
LEVELLAND	15.05	SNYDER	18.14
LITTLEFIELD	17.49	SPUR	17.53
LOCKETTVILLE	13.01	TAHOKA	20.33



Don't Forget Our Site on the
World Wide Web at:

dryline.nws.noaa.gov

Access to:

- Satellite and Radar Imagery
- Watches and Warnings
- Graphics Generated Hourly
(by our server)
- Aviation Products
- Info. About Our Office
- ...and much more



Tornado Safety



**Know where to go and what to do if threatening weather approaches...
These safety rules could save your life!**

Now is the time to make sure you and your family are ready for severe weather season. Take a few minutes to review these safety rules - be prepared!

Before the storm...

- Develop a plan for you and your family for home, work, school, and when outdoors.
- Practice your tornado drills.
- Be sure to have a NOAA Weather radio with a warning alarm and battery backup.
- Listen to radio, TV, or NOAA Weather Radio for information.

If a warning is issued or if threatening weather approaches...

- When in a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement.
- When an underground shelter is not available, move to an interior room on the lowest floor.
- Stay away from windows.
- Get out of automobiles.
- Abandon mobile homes, which, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.

Without an anemometer, it is difficult to accurately determine wind speeds. It can also be a challenge estimating hail sizes. Here are some guidelines that can help you determine hail sizes and wind speeds during severe weather episodes.



Hail Size Estimates (in inches)

Pea	1/4"
Penny/Dime	3/4"
Quarter	1"
Half Dollar	1 1/4"
Golf Ball	1 3/4"
Tennis Ball	2 1/2"
Baseball	2 3/4"
Grapefruit	4"
Softball	4 1/2"

Wind Speed Estimates

25-31 MPH	Large branches in motion; whistling in telephone wires
32-38 MPH	Whole trees in motion
39-54 MPH	Twigs break off of tree; wind impedes walking
55-72 MPH	Damage to chimneys and TV antennas; tree branches broken; shallow rooted trees pushed over.
73-112 MPH	Peels surface off roofs; windows broken; trailer houses overturned
113+ MPH	Roofs torn off houses; weak buildings and trailer houses destroyed; large trees snapped and uprooted



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In This Issue...

Final 1996 Precip Stats, Spring Weather Outlook, Spotter Training, and much more...

Crossword Puzzle Answers

Across Down

1. Downburst 1. Downdraft
3. HP 2. Supercell
4. Anvil 5. Rainfoot
6. Hail 8. Thunderstorm
7. Flanking Line 10. Wall Cloud
8. Tornado 11. Rain Free Base
9. LP 14. Lightning
12. Watch 18. Warning
13. Funnel
15. Updraft
16. Shelf
17. Spout
19. Dryline
20. Gustnado
21. Mesocyclone

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