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## ***Weather Highlights of the Past 100 Years***

**The following events are a collection of some of the major events over South Central Texas for the past 100 years...beginning with the major Arctic Freeze of February 1899.**

### **- February 1899 Arctic Freeze over Texas -**

February 1899 Arctic Outbreak across Texas - In February of 1899 record cold affected Texas. A record February low for San Antonio of 4 degrees was set February 12, 1899. It was also a record February low for Austin of -1 on February 12, 1899. During this historic cold spell, extremely cold temperatures affected the entire state of Texas. On February 13, 1899 the whole part of Galveston Bay, except the main channel, was covered by thin ice. Lows in other locations around Texas on Feb. 12, 1899 include: Tulia -23; Amarillo -16; Brownsville 16; Dallas-Ft. Worth -8; Waco -5; Laredo 5; Galveston 8; and Corpus Christi 11. In the February of 1899 arctic outbreak, the coldest low in Brownsville was 12 on Feb. 13, 1899, still an all time record low for Brownsville. The low of -23 at Tulia, in the southern part of the Texas panhandle, Feb. 12, 1899 was a record low for the state of Texas, then was tied when Seminole observed -23 on Feb. 8, 1933. Unofficial reports of -30 came from Wolf Creek and also southeast of Perryton, both in the northern part of the Texas panhandle.

### **- 1900 -**

**The next 2 weather events listed for 1900 and 1902 were not in South Central Texas... however they are very significant events in Texas Weather History.**

1900 - Tragic and Deadly Galveston Hurricane and its effects on Galveston and parts of Southeast Texas. Near 6000 fatalities.

May 1902 - May 18, 1902 - Deadly tornado strikes Goliad, Texas, with 114 fatalities. Took top floor off the courthouse.

August 20, 1909 - High of 107 at San Antonio was the hottest of record in San Antonio until August 19, 1986, when the high was 108.

### **- 1910 -**

June 1913 - June 28 and 29, 1913 Flooding over parts of Uvalde County. Montell received 20.6 inches of rain in 24 hours.

December 1913 - December 1 to 4, 1913 - Widespread floods over Central and Southeast Texas, plus parts of South Central Texas. San Marcos received 15.5 inches of rain in one day. Austin received 10.66 inches of rain on the 3rd and 4th. Some parts of San Antonio got 7 inches of rain in one day; however official rain was 2.02 inches the 4th. In this flood 177 fatalities and much property damage.

1914 - Wettest year of record for Del Rio, 37.75 inches.

April 1914 - April 9, 1914 latest freeze of record for Austin, Texas, low of 32.

March 8-9, 1915 - Latest recorded snow, 1.9 inches, for San Antonio.

1915 - April of 1915 Devastating and deadly floods strike Austin, Texas with 35 fatalities.

1917 Dry Year Over Texas - Driest of record for many places across the state. Driest year of record for San Antonio, 10.11 inches, and 3rd driest for Austin, 15.58 inches and Del Rio 7.65 inches.

October 1917 - Earliest freeze of record for San Antonio on October 30th, low of 32.

1919 - Floods over Central and South Central Texas. Wettest year of record for Austin, 64.88 inches, 2nd wettest for San Antonio, 50.30 inches and 5th wettest for Del Rio, 30.15 inches.

## **- 1920 -**

1921 - September 8 to 10, 1921 - September Floods. Most deadly flood in Texas history, with 215 fatalities statewide. Floods in Austin and San Antonio. 51 of the 215 fatalities were in San Antonio. Thrall in Williamson County got 38.2 inches in 24 hours. Other rainfall rates at Thrall - 23.4 inches in 6 hours and 31.8 inches in 12 hours. Storm Total Rainfall at Thrall in eastern Williamson County was 39.70 inches of rain. Northern parts of Bexar County got 18 inches in 24 hours.

May 1922 - May 4, 1922 Tornado strikes Austin, Texas. 13 fatalities and half a million dollars damage.

July 18, 1923 - High of 109 in Austin tied for the hottest of record with July 26, 1954. This has been broken 6 times in the 2000s with 2 days at 112 and 4 at 110.

April 1924 - April 26, 1924 - An F2 Tornado struck in Travis County, with 5 fatalities and 15 injured.

October 1924 - October 26, 1924 - Earliest freeze of record for Austin, low of 31.

April 1925 - April 28, 1925 - An F2 Tornado struck in Hays County, with 3 fatalities and 40 injured.

April 1927 - April 12, 1927 - An F5 tornado struck Rocksprings, Texas. The tornado destroyed most of what was Rocksprings in April of 1927. 72 fatalities in Rocksprings. 2 additional fatalities 2 miles northeast of Leakey, where the tornado passed by. The tornado was documented as being over a mile wide when it struck Rocksprings.

## **- 1930 -**

**After starting out with cold conditions in January of 1930, rather mild winters followed in the early 1930s. The Mid 1930s brought several very intense flood events.**

1930 - Coldest January of record for San Antonio and Del Rio, plus 2nd coldest of record for Austin. Coldest all time month of record for Del Rio.

June/July 1932 - June 30 to July 2, 1932 Floods over the Hill Country. Rains near Mountain Home in Kerr County of 33.6 inches in 24 hours.

March 1935 - March 5, 1935 - Very powerful hail/wind storm affected San Antonio. One Million Dollars property damage.

1935 - May and June Floods. Heavy rains and flooding in South Central Texas...including Austin and San Antonio. 9.21 inches of rain in May and 9.71 inches in June 1935 for Austin. For San Antonio May 1935 brought 14.07 inches of rain, wettest May of record, and June had 8.41 inches. After one episode of heavy rains in May 1935, water got into stores on Alamo Plaza in San Antonio. On May 31, 1935 very heavy rains near D' Hanis in Medina County of 22 to 24 inches of rain in ONLY 2 Hours and 45 Minutes. The heaviest rains occurred at Woodward ranch about 17 miles above D' Hanis on the Seco Creek. Extensive flooding occurred along Seco Creek.

In June of 1935...heavy rains and flooding occurred across parts of the Texas Hill country east to Austin and also in the Uvalde and La Pryor Areas. Rains amounting to near 20 inches occurred in some places in Early to Mid June 1935. Extensive flooding was observed along the Llano, Colorado and Pedernales Rivers...including Junction, Llano, Fredericksburg and downstream to Austin. Extensive flooding affected Austin by June 14 and 15, 1935, where the Colorado River got up to just 1 foot below the worst recorded flood for Austin... that came in July of 1869. Flooding along the Llano River was the highest of record at that time. Also in Mid June of 1935... heavy rains struck on the West Nueces and Nueces River plus Sycamore Creek. Flooding was noted from north of Brackettville to along Sycamore Creek to the Rio Grande, a few miles below Del Rio, and east to Uvalde. Rains in Uvalde on June 15, 1935 came in with 12.5 inches in 12 hours and 17.6 inches in 24 hours.

1936 - Heavy rains and flooding affected Austin in May and July of 1936. Austin received 8.15 inches of rain in May of 1936 and 9.25 inches of rain in July of 1936.

September 1936 - September 13 to 18, 1936 Heavy rains near Junction of over 30 inches.

Nov. 11, 1937 - heaviest snow of record for Austin of 11.0 inches.

Mid July to Early August 1938 - Rain amounts of up to near 20 to near 30 inches was reported on the Upper Colorado River to the west and northwest of Austin over parts of Central Texas. Rivers rose rapidly with floods. Flooding occurred even downstream along the Colorado River in Austin and downstream from Austin.

## **- 1940 -**

August 1942 - Remnants of Tropical Storm move just east of San Antonio. Very windy in area with power outages over the area. 74 mph wind gust at San Antonio.

May 1944 - May 1, 1944 - An F2 Tornado struck in Travis and Williamson County, with 3 fatalities and 8 injured.

May 1946 - May 16, 1946 Severe Hailstorm in San Antonio. 5 million dollars damage.

September 1946 - Floods over South Central Texas. Wettest September of record for San Antonio, 15.79 inches. In a heavy rain and flood event on September 27, 1946 17.3 inches of rain fell over south San Antonio and southern Bexar County.

June 1948 - June 23 and 24, 1948 Heavy rains and floods between Brackettville-Rocksprings-Del Rio. 26 inches of rain overnight.

January 31, 1949 - Arctic Outbreak accompanied by snow. Skies cleared with snow on the ground and coldest lows of record followed for Austin Mueller Airport, -2, Austin Bergstrom, -5, and San Antonio, 0. The low at Del Rio on Jan. 31, 1949 was 17. Lowest January low for Del Rio was 12 Jan. 11, 1918.

All time low of record for Del Rio was 10 on Dec. 23, 1989.

**Like the 1980s, the late 1940s through the 1950s and to the early 1960s was a period of vast extremes from cold to hot and dry to wet.**

## **- 1950 -**

Late January/Early February 1951- Arctic Outbreak producing cold of long duration, longest below 32 for San Antonio. Total time below freezing for San Antonio was 108 hours and 28 min. from Midnight Jan. 29 to 12:28 pm Feb. 2, 1951.

1951-56 Long drought years, probably driest in several hundred years. Although it was a long drought, it was briefly interrupted by 2 floods in 1952 and 1954.

September 1952 - Floods over parts of the Hill Country. September 9 to 11, 1952 near Fredricksburg, Gillespie County, 28.8 inches in less than 2 days.

April 1953 - April 28, 1953 - An F3 and F4 Tornado struck in Bexar County, with 3 fatalities and 20 injured.

April 1954 - April 30, 1954 - Tornado outbreak over Travis, Williamson, Lee, Milam, Brazos, Angelina, Choctaw and Bowie Counties.

June 1954 - In June 1954 the remnants of Hurricane Alice moved near and north of Del Rio. In the midst of a long drought, a flood occurred from north of Del Rio, down stream on the Rio Grande River to Eagle Pass to Laredo and south of Laredo. Over 30 inches of rain fell north of Del Rio. The newly completed Falcon Reservoir downstream was filled up in a matter of weeks as the floodwaters moved downstream. Rainfall amounts near 35 inches were observed north of Del Rio.

November 1955 - November 8, 1955 Earliest snow event in the Austin area. 1 to 3 inches of snow in West Austin.

1957-58 Floods from active El Nino/Southern Oscillation Event ended the long 1950s drought.

## **- 1960 -**

**The 1960s saw effects from 2 major hurricanes that hit the Texas Coast, Carla and Beulah. An arctic outbreak in January 1962 was followed by a hot summer in the summer of 1962. In July to August of 1962, a long string of 100 degree days occurred. Rain was scarce to non existent. A cold winter returned in 1963. Several snowfall events came mainly in February, in the mid 1960s. The late 1960s were characterized by cool weather coming to the area early in the fall and continuing into the winter months. The decade ended with a hot summer in the summer of 1969, that was followed by another cool fall in the fall of 1969. This cool weather trend continued into the winter and early spring of 1970.**

September 1961 - Weather Effects of high winds and rain as the devastating Hurricane Carla moved east of San Antonio.

### **1962 by itself was a year of temperature extremes, like 1949 and 1989**

January 1962 - January Arctic Outbreak, much agricultural crop damage same as December 1983 and December 1989

1962 - July/August - Long string of 100 deg days, a record 21 in a row for San Antonio - Jul. 24 to Aug. 13, 1962.

September 1967 - Effects from devastating Hurricane Beulah, 115 Tornadoes and Heavy Rains that caused flooding. 2 - F3 Tornadoes and 1 - F2 Tornado was reported September 20, 1967. These tornadoes occurred in Lavaca and De Witt Counties. Numerous other reports of tornadoes came areas in South Central Texas.

January 1968 - January South Central Texas Floods. Wettest January of record for San Antonio, 8.52 inches.

## **- 1970 -**

**Although the 1970s began dry, the decade was one of the wettest of record for many locations over South Central Texas. It was overall a decade of cooler temperatures also.**

1970 - Jul 1971 Drought of 1970/71

August 1971 - August - D Hanis/Sabinal Floods meteorologically ended the drought of 1970/71.

May 1972 - May 11-12, 1972 Severe flooding affects New Braunfels and Seguin. Heavy rain below Canyon Dam flooded numerous homes and caused loss of life, with 15 fatalities in New Braunfels.

Late winter to spring and early summer of 1973 - Stormy period that brought severe weather and floods. After a snow in January and another in February, severe weather followed in March with a tragic tornado at Burnet. Also a tornado occurred at Pearsall in April. Stormy weather continued into April and part of May. After brief calm period of weather in late May, heavy rains and localized flooding followed in June of 1973 and also in September 1973.

March 1973 - March 10, 1973 Burnet Tornado. 40 businesses and 161 homes damaged or destroyed.

April 1973 - April 15, 1973 Pearsall and Medina Tornado. Tornado at Pearsall was an F4 and was up 3/4 miles wide. 5 fatalities from this tornado. At Medina the tornado was an F2.

1973 - Most yearly rain for San Antonio of 52.28 inches.

November 1974 - Nov. 23 and 24, 1974 Severe flooding in Hays and Travis Counties in the nighttime hours. 10 Fatalities in Austin and 2 fatalities in San Marcos.

July 1976 - Several Weeks of rains and flooding over South Texas. This made for a very cool July for the area. Some days had highs only in the upper 70s. Wettest July of record for Del Rio, 13.18 inches.

Fall of 1976 - Coldest Fall of record. Fall/Winter of 1976/77, 1977/78 and 1978/79 some of the coolest of record.

April - 1978 - April 22, 1978 severe thunderstorms affect area. High winds and damaging hail on Saturday afternoon, just before the Fiesta Saturday Night parade in San Antonio. 74 mph wind gust at San Antonio. Severe thunderstorms formed just west and northwest of San Antonio, then marched east across San Antonio and affected other parts of South and Southeast Texas as the storms moved east.

August 1978 - August Hill Country Floods. The remnants of Tropical Storm Amelia caused tragic and disastrous floods over the Texas Hill Country. 48 inches of rain fell at Medina in 52

hours and 27 fatalities in the Hill Country. Heavy rains and floods moved to near Albany in North Texas, where 8 fatalities occurred.

July 1979 - July 10, 1979 a 77 mph microburst gust at San Antonio International Airport.

**The next weather event listed for July 1979 was not in South Central Texas...however it was a very significant event in Texas Weather History.**

July 1979 - July 25 and 26, 1979 - Heavy rains from Tropical Storm Claudet affect Southeast Texas. Alvin, Texas had 43 inches rain in 22 hours. Storm total rain was 45 inches.

## **- 1980 -**

**The 1980s was a decade of vast extremes, like the late 1940s to early 1960s. An arctic outbreak in January of 1982 dropped temperatures to their lowest since the early 1960s. Two severe arctic outbreaks followed in December of 1983 and 1989. Very hot temperatures also affected the area in the summer of 1980, August of 1986, and summer of 1989. Drought came in late 1983/1984, followed by abundant rains and floods from late 1984 to late 1987. Meteorologically speaking, drought followed in late 1987 to late 1989.**

1980 - Summer very hot over a long period. 1998 was also hot over a long period, with some days and weeks having hotter temperatures than 1980.

May 1981 - May 24, 1981 Austin, Texas Memorial Day Flood 4 to 10 inches of rain fell at night. Widespread flooding in the Austin Area, with 13 fatalities.

Late August 1981 - August 30 to 31, 1981 - Hallettsville Flood. Heavy rains fell in a 50 to 75 mile wide area and 200 miles long between Seguin and north of Houston. Fayette, Gonzales, Lavaca, De Witt, and Karnes Counties experienced heavy rain and flooding, where near 10 to near 18 inches of rain fell. Water flow was 5 feet deep on the town square in Hallettsville. 90 percent of the business district and 70 percent of the homes in Hallettsville flooded.

**1982 and 1983 Major El Nino/Southern Oscillation Event**, Dry over South Central Texas and floods east of the area. Powerful Gulf lows in the winter of 1983. Windy days in the winter and spring of 1983.

December 1983 - December Arctic Outbreak coldest month of record for San Antonio. Coldest December of record for San Antonio and Austin/Bergstrom. 2nd coldest December for Austin/City climate location and for Del Rio. Cold weather came in mid December and lasted the rest of the month. Brief warmup the afternoon of December 27 was followed by another blast of cold air the night of the 27th and early morning the 28th. Record number of hours below freezing in Austin of 140 hours Dec. 21 to 27, 1983. This record was broken in February of 2021.

February 1984 - Sunday February 26 and Monday February 27, 1984 were very windy days over a large part of South Texas. A strong low pressure system moved over North Texas, helping to bring a very powerful Pacific Cold Front through South Texas and across the Gulf of Mexico.

May 1984 - May 7, 1984 Severe Hailstorm in San Antonio. 5 million dollars damage.

October 1984 - October floods ended the dry period and drought that affected South Central Texas in 1984. The next 3 years of 1985, 1986 and 1987 had above normal rainfall...however most of the 1987 rain fell in the first 7 months. By late summer of 1987 a dry period meteorologically began.

January 1985 - January Record Snows Del Rio to San Antonio. Record snow for San Antonio, 13.5 inches and Del Rio, 8.6 inches.

May 1985 - May 24, 1985 Severe Hailstorm in San Antonio. 5 to 7 million dollars damage.

January 1986 - January 7 and 8, 1986 Another heavy snow event affects Del Rio with 8.2 inches of snow. This occurred just one year after the January 1985 Record Snows from Del Rio to San Antonio.

1986 - June 3 and 4, 1986 Heavy rains begin late night of June 3rd and proceed in the early morning hours of June 4, 1986. Floods in San Antonio.

August 19, 1986 - Hottest day of record for San Antonio with 108. This record has been broken 3 times and tied once in since 2000, with one day each reaching 111, 110, and 109.

December 1986 - December heavy rains across San Antonio.

Early April of 1987 - late freeze to affect a large area came. Latest freeze of record for San Antonio with 31 on April 3rd.

1987 May to June Floods. A period of very wet weather from May 13 to June 12, 1987. Widespread flooding over the Hill Country and South Central Texas. For that time in history, a 30 day official rain record for San Antonio of 18.45 inches, later broken in October 1998.

July 1987 - Flood on the Gaudalupe River west of Comfort Jul 17, 1987, Bus Tragedy Flood, 10 fatalities.

June 9, 1988 - High of 112 in Del Rio was the hottest day of record for Del Rio. This record was tied once in 2020.

September 17, 1988 - Tornadoes from the remnants of Hurricane Gilbert caused near 15 million dollars of damage in Del Rio and near 35 million dollars of damage in San Antonio. In the Del Rio area extensive damage occurred in 3 subdivisions and to several mobile homes. Considerable damage was also done to the marina on the edge of Lake Amistad. In addition to the tornadoes, high winds from thunderstorms caused damage, and locally heavy rains caused

flooding. The heaviest damage in San Antonio was at Kelly AFB. In the San Antonio area damage occurred to homes, apartments and commercial buildings. About 12 warehouses at Kelly AFB suffered damage. Damage to vehicles in the tornado paths was reported in Del Rio and in San Antonio.

November 4, 1988 - Very warm weather over the area. Record highs for the entire month of November, with a high of 96 in Del Rio and 94 in San Antonio. On the 4th the high of 89 at Austin/Bergstrom and Austin Mueller Airport was a daily record. Record November highs for the City of Austin was 91 Nov. 10, 1947 and Nov. 13, 1951 at Austin Mueller Airport. This has since been tied twice after the station moved to Camp Mabry, on Nov. 10 2006 and Nov. 1 2016. Record high at Austin/Bergstrom for November was 90 on Nov. 8, 1989, Nov. 10, 1947 and Nov. 13, 1951. This has since been tied once Nov. 5, 2008 and broken Nov. 1, 2016 with a high of 91.

May 1989 - May 16, 1989 Brackettville Tornado.

1989 December freeze - lowest All Time low of record and lowest December temperature for Del Rio of 10 on December 23rd. Lowest December low of record for Austin, 4, and San Antonio, 6, also on December 23rd. Highest sea level pressure tied or exceeded at many locations on December 23rd. This was the 2nd major freeze of the 1980s. The 1989 freeze produced lower temperatures for parts of Central and South Central Texas; however it did not last as long as the December 1983 freeze. After the December 1983 freeze cold weather continued into January and February of 1984. After the December 1989 freeze, mild conditions followed from January to March of 1990.

## **- 1990 -**

**The 1990s began with wetter than normal rainfall, which continued until 1995 when a drought set in. This drought was ended meteorologically in the Fall of 1996/Winter of 1997. This wet period that started here ended in the spring and summer of 1998, was temporarily interrupted by an extremely wet period from August to November of 1998, the followed by a very dry period again. The 1990s was characterized by milder winters and more hot weather in the summer. Cold weather tried to build over the area in the fall off 1992/winter 1993 and fall 1993/winter of 1994; however a very strong subtropical jet stream continued to steer the coldest air to the eastern and northeastern U.S. Vast extremes in temperature affected the area from the fall of 1995 to winter of 1996. A late cold outbreak also affected the area in late April of 1997. Most summers were hotter than normal and most winters were very mild.**

July 1990 - July 15/16, 1990 - San Antonio July Floods - Wettest July of record for San Antonio. This record was broken in 2002 and 2007.

December 1991 - December Christmas Floods from the Texas Hill Country, east to Austin and south to San Antonio. These floods also extended eastward to Southeast Texas. It was the wettest December of record for Austin and San Antonio.

October 30, 1993 - Earliest date of record for snow in Del Rio, 1.2 inches and San Antonio, a Trace.

May 1993 - May 5, 1993 Cinco de Mayo flood in San Antonio.

October 1994 - Stormy October for Central and South Central Texas with floods, similar to October 1998. Night of October 7 and early morning of October 8, 1994, torrential rains fall over a period of a few hours from Austin to San Antonio, causing flooding. October 16 to 18, 1994, floods affect eastern part of South Central Texas and Southeast Texas.

February of 1996 - Vast extremes in temperature for a single month. Very cold arctic chill in the first few days, followed by record breaking heat of highs near 100 in the mid to late part of the late month. The month ended with a cold outbreak.

September 1996 - Tornado Event that affected the Texas Hill Country, as rains began to return to the area in a stormier pattern, meteorologically beginning to end the 1995 to late summer 1996 dry period.

May 27, 1997 - Tragic and deadly F5 Tornado hits Jarrell, Texas in Williamson County, where 27 fatalities occurred. Tornadoes also affected parts of Austin and west of Austin. In this severe weather event an F4 Tornado struck Pedernales Valley and an F3 Tornado struck Cedar Park. Other tornadoes in the area included 2 F2 Tornadoes and 5 F1/F0 Tornadoes, plus 1 waterspout. In addition 17 severe hail reports were observed, 9 downbursts, and 7 flash flood events. In the evening hours of May 27, a wind gust of 122 mph was observed at Kelly AFB in southwest San Antonio from a thunderstorm. [See Details](#)

1997 - June Hill country floods, most flooding west and southwest of Comfort since 1870s.

September 9, 1997 - after no 100 degree days in the summer for Austin, the high reached 101. Shortly thereafter a line of thunderstorms swept through the Capitol City and surrounding area with winds gusts near 70 mph at some locations.

February 1998 - Eight severe weather events in the entire month. Numerous thunderstorms in these events accompanied by hail. Tornadoes in the area on the February 10th event.

1998 - Summer 1998 very hot over a long period. Most 100 degree days of record in a year for Del Rio, 69, and for San Antonio, 36. Like the summer of 1980, long and hot, with some days and weeks having hotter temperatures in 1998 than 1980. The 1998 summer moderated rapidly as August and September rains came.

August 1998 - August 1998 - Del Rio Floods from Charley. Wettest month and August of record for Del Rio. Severe flooding in the Del Rio and surrounding areas. The month of Aug. 1998 broke many rain records for Del Rio [See Del Rio Rain Records For Additional Details](#) [See Weather Event Description on Tropical Storm Charley and the Heavy Rains over Parts of South Central Texas and Del Rio.](#)

October 1998 - October 17/18, 1998 - South Central Texas Floods A series of upper air disturbances moving in from the west and southwest...plus an excellent moisture tap from the Pacific Ocean and Gulf of Mexico...helped to develop a very heavy rain event over South Central Texas and the Texas Hill Country...on Saturday October 17, 1998. As a cool front moved into the area late Saturday night and Sunday morning... October 18th...more rain developed ahead of and along the cool front. On Sunday the 18th, 1998...the cool front drifted near the coast and stalled. In the wake of the front...on Sunday the 18th and also Monday the 19th...clouds...rain and showers lingered. [See More Details on the October 1998 Flood Event over South Central Texas](#)