



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



January 2006

Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons		Estimated Damage		Character of Storm
					Killed	Injured	Property	Crops	

NEW MEXICO, Southeast

NMZ033

Central Lea County

01	0900MST				0	3	700K	10K	Wildfire
02	0900MST								

Record high temperatures (in the mid to upper 70s), very low relative humidities, high winds, and two and a half months without measurable precipitation combined to produce a very active fire weather day. SPC issued a critical fire weather area for west Texas and southeastern New Mexico in their Day 1 Fire Weather Outlook issued early on January 1st.

A grass fire driven by wind burned 50,000 acres west of Hobbs on New Year's Day. The western side of Hobbs had to be evacuated, including the community college, a casino, and several neighborhoods. Three firefighters sustained minor injuries, but no one was seriously injured. Four families were provided shelter by the Red Cross, though eleven homes were destroyed. Two businesses and 10 vehicles also were destroyed by the fire.

In addition to the wildfire west of Hobbs, two fires burned near Tatum in northern Lea county. No structures were damaged in these fires, however, U.S. Highway 380 was closed from Roswell to the Texas state line during the day because of the fires. According to local authorities, one fire near Tatum was caused by fireworks and the other was sparked by a car crash.

NMZ029

Northern Lea County

01	1038MST				0	0	0	0	High Wind (MG62)
02	1552MST								

High winds affected west Texas and southeastern New Mexico as a deep low pressure system tracked across the area on New Year's Day. These winds combined with very low relative humidities to produce conditions that aided in the rapid growth and spread of wildfires. No wind damage was reported.

TEXAS, West

TXZ074-074

Davis / Apache Mountains Area

01	0840CST				0	0	0	0	High Wind (MG68)
02	0215CST								

A deep low pressure system tracked across west Texas and southeastern New Mexico on New Year's Day resulting in high winds across much of the area. These winds combined with very low relative humidities to produce conditions that aided in the rapid growth and spread of wildfires. No wind damage was reported.

TXZ070

Reagan

01	1045CST				0	1	15K	1.3M	Wildfire
05	1900CST								

Record high temperatures (in the mid to upper 70s), very low relative humidities, high winds, and two and a half months without measurable precipitation combined to produce a very active fire weather day. SPC issued a critical fire weather area for west Texas and southeastern New Mexico in their Day 1 Fire Weather Outlook issued early on January 1st.

A grassfire spread to over 40,000 acres in Reagan and Irion counties on New Year's Day. Newspapers originally reported the cause as sparks from a transformer. Later, a fire department official in Big Lake reported that a hawk landed on power lines and burst into flames, starting the fire. Because of high winds, record high temperatures, and very low relative humidities, it took firefighters 3 days to contain the wildfire. It was extinguished a couple of days later. One firefighter sustained 2nd degree burns to his face while fighting the fire but was treated and released from a regional burn center. The fire was in mostly open country and thus only a hunting cabin was destroyed.

In addition to the major fire in Reagan and Irion counties, several other small fires scorched west Texas. Both Ector and Midland counties had fire and fireworks bans in effect for the period between New Year's Eve and January 6, 2006. Several other counties



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TEXAS, West

also had fireworks bans in effect for the New Year's holiday.

January was a dry month overall. Several other minor fires occurred throughout west Texas, including two along Interstate 20 in Stanton. Smoke from one of these fires reduced visibility on Interstate 20, causing a five car pile-up that resulted in two injuries. Another fire in Scurry county, near the Inadale Cotton Gin, burned 415 modules of cotton, each worth around \$3,000. Each of the modules contains about 10 bales of cotton.

Damage estimates in the above entry include all fires that burned in Texas during the month of January.