

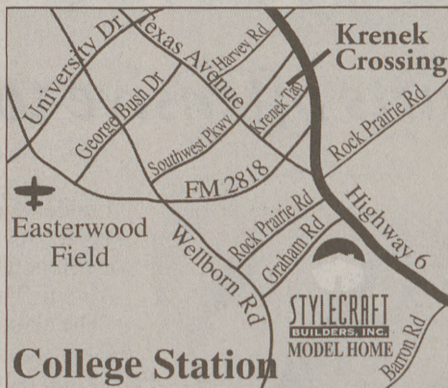
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Larry Spatola patiently waits as muddy flood waters rise around his suburban Tuesday afternoon after torrential rains flooded several streets in Amarillo.

Spatola waited long enough for the flood waters to recede and walked away saying, "It wasn't that bad when I drove in."

Texas sets June record for wetness Mississippi, Louisiana also damp

By Randolph E. Schmid
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Texans slogged through the wettest June on record, and residents of the Gulf Coast and south-central states also had wetter than normal weather, the government said Tuesday.

It was the second wettest June on record for Mississippi and No. 3 for Louisiana, the National Climatic Data Center said.

In its monthly climate analysis, the center, a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, also reported record dryness across southern California while parts of the Midwest had a cooler-than-average June.

Overall, Texas averaged 6.87 inches of rain in June. That topped 1899's record average, 6.72 inches.

But some areas nearly doubled the statewide average. It rained for 18 days in northern parts of the state in June, a record, and for 21 consecutive days in Houston.

Victoria Regional Airport in Victoria, Texas, recorded 13.5 inches of rain in June, topping a local record of 12.84 inches set in 1977.

Even though it didn't set a record, Mississippi was even wetter than Texas. It averaged 10.0 inches for the month, second only to the 11.5 inches recorded in 1900. And Louisiana averaged 12.22 inches in June, trailing the 12.44 of 2001 and 13.64 inches of 1989.

While past record years generally have been caused by tropical storms, no tropical activity

was blamed for the conditions this year. Rainfall was also above average for a series of strong thunderstorms repeatedly swept over parts of Texas.

It was also the wettest June on record for Richmond, Va., with 9.70 inches, compared with the 9.24-inches of 1938.

Rainfall was below average for June in many areas of the West where drought has persisted for much of the past five to six years.

Southern California as well as eastern Arizona had record or near record dryness in June, worsening moderate to severe drought in the region.

The climate center said reservoir levels remained below average in many Western areas. At the end of June the part of the Western United States in moderate to extreme drought increased to 74 percent. The most extensive drought on record for the West occurred July 1934, when 97 percent of the region was in moderate to extreme drought.

The average temperature for the month in the contiguous states was 68.6 degrees Fahrenheit, 0.5 degree below the average for 1895 to 2003 mean.

However, Nevada and Florida had months above average temperatures for June.

Alaska had record warmth, with a statewide temperature 5.2 degrees above normal and two communities setting local records.

Annette Island reached a scorching 93 degrees on June 19, topping the old record of 90 set in Nome set a June record with an 83 degree record June 7, edging the 81 degree record set in 1957.

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