West Texas/Southeastern New Mexico Climate Summary for May 2017

Midland/Odessa Texas

U.S. National Weather Service Midland, TX

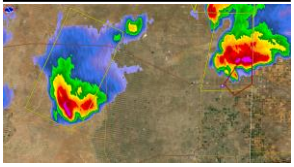
@NWSMidland

May 2017 Temperature, Precipitation, Humidity, and Wind Summary

May 1st-15th: May began with a warm and dry week across west Texas and southeastern New Mexico. High temperatures on the 1st were mainly in the 70s and 80s and increased on the 2nd with highs in the 80s and 90s. On the 3rd, a dry cold front swept through the region bringing gusty winds and below normal temperatures. A few of the highest wind gusts included 55mph at Guadalupe Peak, TX, 49mph in Carlsbad, NM, and 42mph at Midland International Air & Space Port (MAF). Temperatures were below normal on the 4th and 5th with highs mainly in the 70s and lows in the 40s. Surface high pressure built over the region on the 6th and temperatures increased to at or above normal. Highest temperatures on the 6th were 100°F in Pecos, TX, 99°F in Presidio, TX, and 97°F in Carlsbad, NM. Moisture moved into the region by the 8th due to cut-off low pressure over the southwestern United States. A few strong to severe storms impacted Eddy and Lea Counties in southeastern New Mexico on the 8th. The upper-level low slowly progressed eastward and more thunderstorms occurred on the 9th. Numerous storms initiated ahead of a cold front in Eddy and Lea Counties and became strong to severe. Hail up to 1.00" was reported near Carlsbad, NM and a Tornado Warning was issued for a possible funnel cloud near Tatum, NM. Highest rainfall totals on the 9th were 0.60" in Seminole, TX 0.50" in Jal, NM, and 0.40" in Caprock, NM. During the morning hours of the 10th, storms merged along the cold front and moved across the northern Permian Basin. Rainfall amounts on the 10th included 0.30" in Odessa, TX, and 0.05" at MAF. Cooler temperatures were present from the 10th-13th with daily averages down to 5°F below normal. High pressure returned to the region on the 14th, however a small disturbance moved across the Mexico border and provided instability for thunderstorms over Big Bend National Park. Lightning sparked a small wildfire that grew to over 1000 acres and forced parts of the park to close until the fire was contained. On the 14th, temperatures increased area-wide to over 10°F above normal in some locations. Hottest temperatures on the 14th included 104°F at Rio Grande Village, TX, 103°F in Castolon, TX, and 100°F in Carlsbad, NM. Isolated evening storms developed and some became severe near Andrews, TX, Goldsmith, TX and Fort Stockton, TX. Rain cleared out of the region by the 15th and temperatures remained well above normal.

May 16th-31st: A retreating dryline collided with a cold front over west Texas on the evening of the 16th. A line of severe storms exploded along the front and raced eastward. Hail between quarter and golf ball size fell in parts of Odessa and Midland, TX. On the 17th, temperatures returned to near normal except for extreme heat along the Rio Grande. Moisture returned to the eastern counties on the 18th and thunderstorms occurred in the early morning hours of the 19th. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and a Tornado Warning were issued between Odessa, TX and Colorado City, TX where rainfall totals included 0.85" in Colorado City, TX, 0.53" in Big Spring, TX, and 0.27" at MAF. A strong cold front moved through the region on the 20th which kept temperatures well below average through the 23rd. Several rounds of storms occurred during this period. Heavy rain fell on the 21st along the Rio Grande which caused flooding. Greatest rainfall totals on the 21st were 3.90" in Lajitas, TX, 2.55" in Castolon, TX and 2.40" in Chisos Basin, TX. More rain fell on the 22nd mainly from southeastern New Mexico to the northern Permian Basin with totals including 0.38" in Fort Stockton, TX, and 0.28" in Odessa, TX. The area began to dry out and warm up on the 23rd and by the 24th the dryline moved into central Texas. Highs were in the 90s to lower 100s from the 25th-27th. MAF recorded its first 100°F day of the year on the 25th with a high of 102°F and also tied a record high of 100°F on the 26th. Other notable highs were 113°F in Rio Grande Village, TX, and 110°F in Terlingua, TX on the 25th. A cold front brought relief to the region on the 28th as temperatures dropped to at or below average. Temperatures remained around normal for the rest of May as multiple upper disturbances tracked through the region. Storms formed over the Davis Mountains and Big Bend National Park on the 29th and 30th and the northern Permian Basin was impacted by storms that caused flash flooding on the 31st. Highest rainfall amounts from the 29th-31st were 1.94" in Marathon, TX on the 29th, 0.90" in Bakersfield, TX on the 30th, and 1.60" in Odessa, TX on the 31st.

Supercell thunderstorms on radar in southeastern New Mexico on May 9th

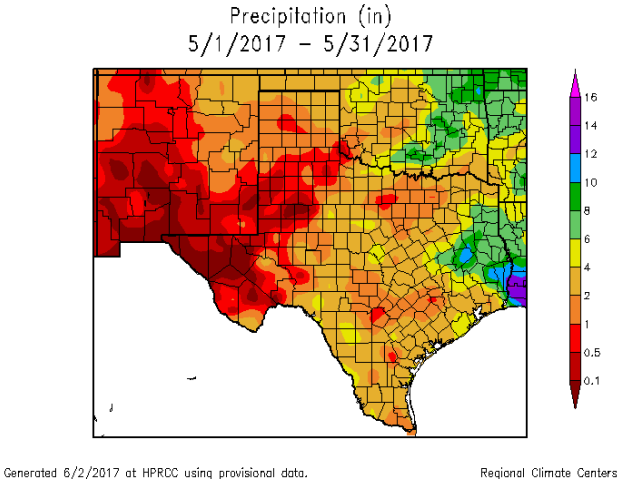


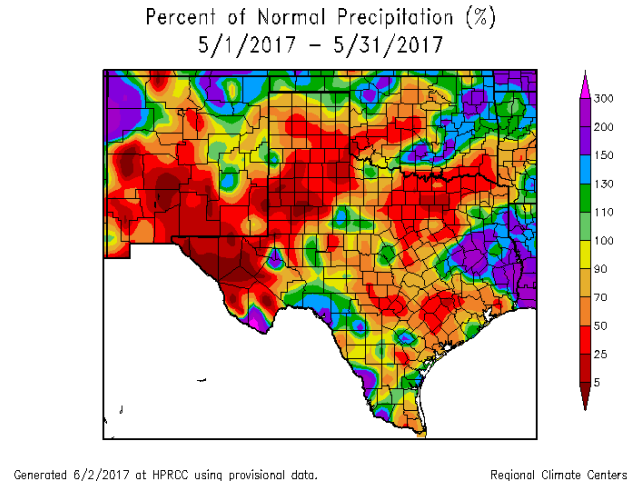
Lightning strike near NWS Midland /Odessa, TX on May 14th

Crown Mountain Fire in Big Bend National Park on May 15th

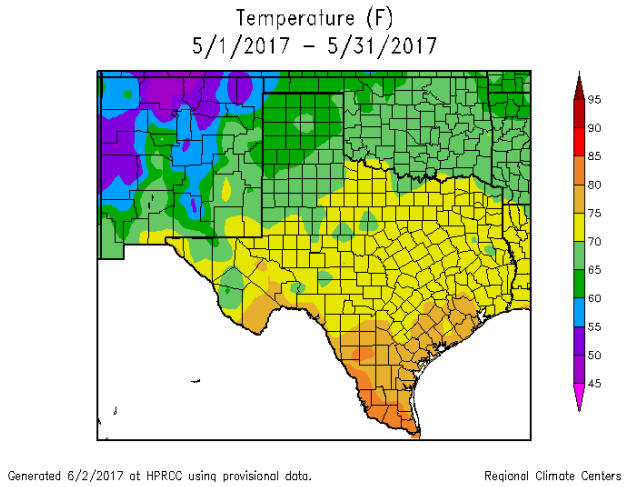
Sunset behind approaching cold front over Midland/Odessa, TX on May 16th

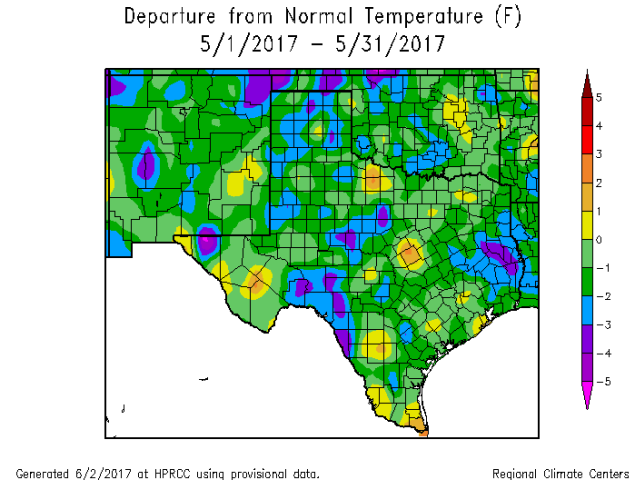
Severe Thunderstorm near Whites City, NM on May 22nd



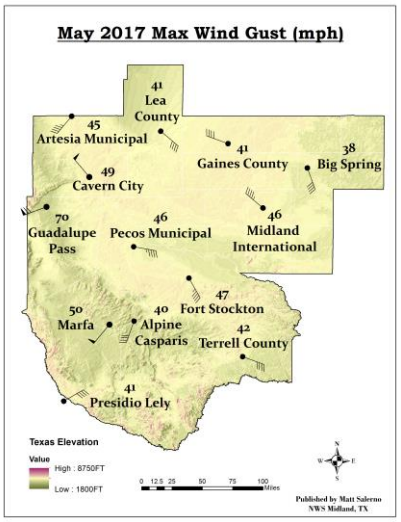


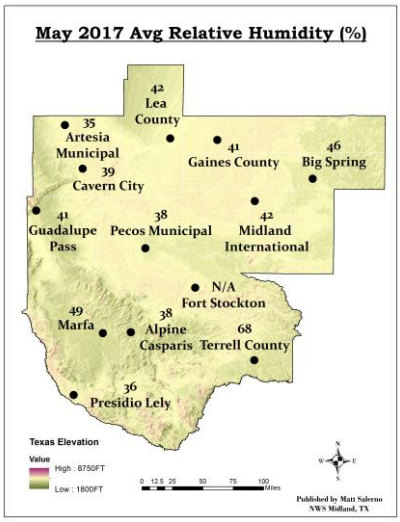
Precipitation in west Texas and southeastern New Mexico ranged from 0.00" at multiple locations to 4.98" in Lajitas, TX. The wettest areas were the Big Bend National Park, and parts of Crane, Glasscock, Pecos, Reagan, Terrell and Ward Counties. The driest regions were portions of Culberson, Jeff Davis, Martin and Reeves Counties.



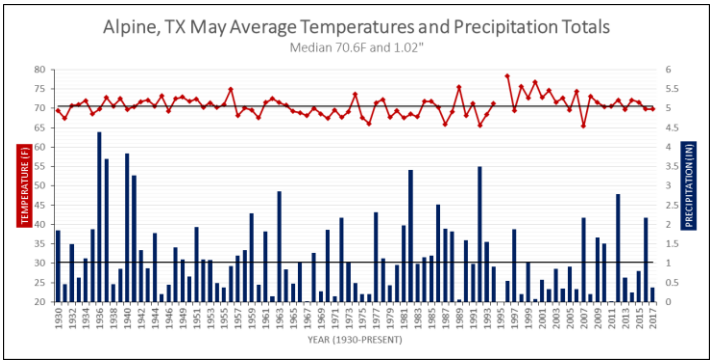


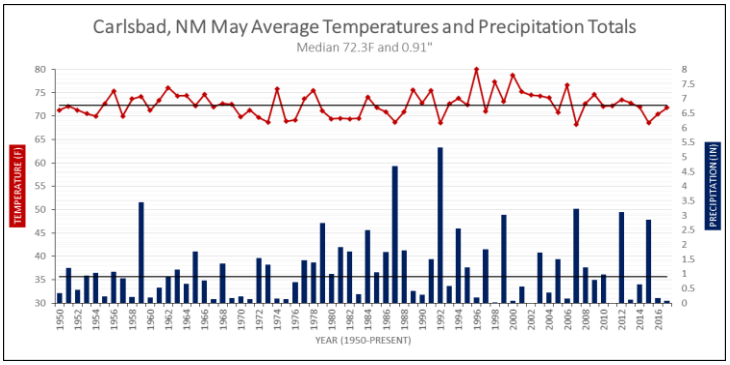
Average monthly temperatures ranged from near 56°F at Guadalupe Peak to about 83°F in Big Bend National Park. Most of west Texas and southeastern New Mexico experienced monthly temperatures at or below normal. Warmer than normal temperatures were present in Brewster and Jeff Davis Counties and along the Rio Grande in Presidio County.

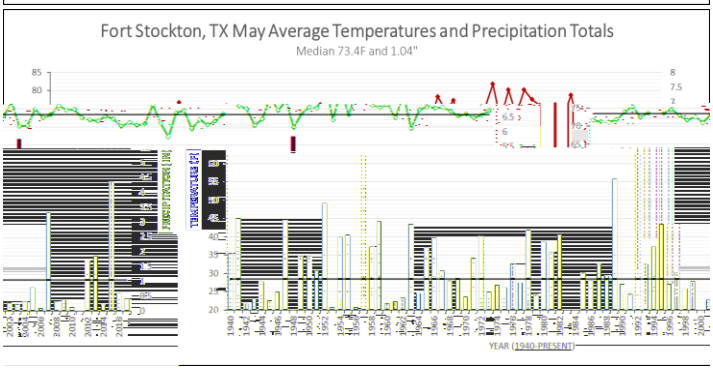


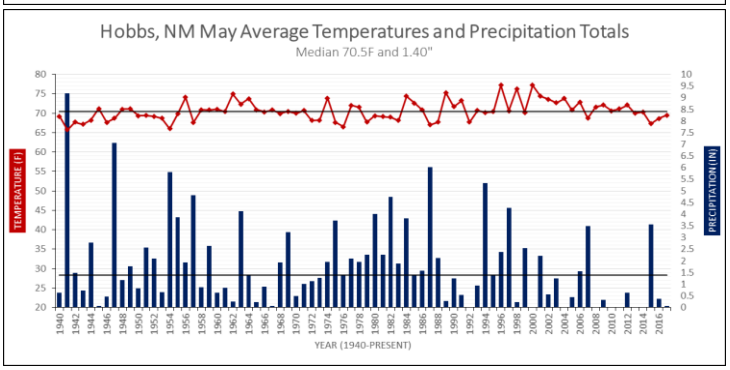


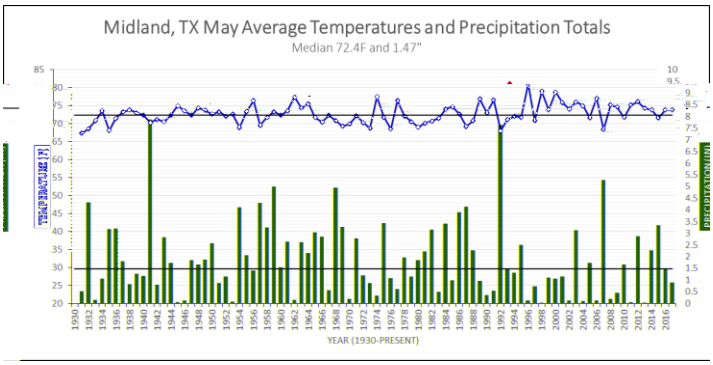
Average wind speeds ranged from 9 mph at Alpine, TX and Presidio, TX to 22 mph at Guadalupe Pass, TX. The strongest wind gusts occurred at Guadalupe Pass, TX and Marfa, TX. Average relative humidity values ranged from 35-68%.

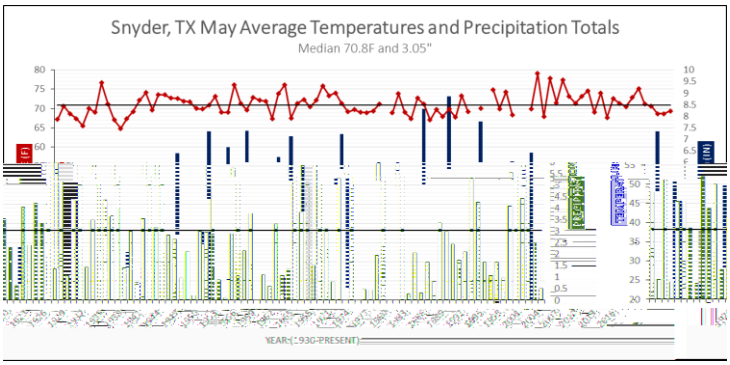












Note: Each location has a slightly different period of record. Data gaps within each graph indicate missing data for those years.

May Temperature and Precipitation	Avg Temp (°F)	Departure from Avg (°F)	Temp Ranking (Period of Record)	Precip (In.)	Departure from Avg (In.)	Precip Ranking (Period of Record)
Alpine COOP	69.8	-0.8	T-33rd Coolest	0.38	-0.83	18th Driest
Carlsbad Airport	71.8	-0.8	T-27th Coolest	0.07	-1.38	4th Driest
Fort Stockton COOP	74.5	+0.9	T-27th Warmest	0.41	-1.05	T-18th Driest
Hobbs COOP	69.5	-0.7	29th Coolest	0.05	-1.80	7th Driest
Midland International	73.8	+0.2	T-26th Warmest	0.89	-0.85	28th Driest
Snyder COOP	69.3	-1.7	T-30th Coolest	0.53	-2.61	7th Driest

The graphs above show May temperature and precipitation records for six individual weather stations at select cities. Average May temperatures were near normal at all six locations. The coolest city was Snyder, TX while both Fort Stockton, TX and Midland, TX were slightly warmer than normal. None of the six cities had temperature rankings inside the top ten for warmest/coolest May on record. Since 1995, a slight cooling trend in May temperatures is observed in each graph and years prior to 1995 are much more variable. Precipitation totals were below average at all six locations despite the number of storms that occurred throughout the month. This was most likely due to the hit-or-miss nature of heavy rainfall which occurred over mainly rural areas. Midland, TX received the most rainfall with a total of 0.89" and Carlsbad, NM received the least at 0.07". Snyder, TX had the greatest deficit compared to average. Hobbs, NM, and Snyder, TX recorded their 7th driest May on record and Carlsbad, NM experienced its 4th driest May on record. In summary, at each location temperatures were near normal and precipitation was below average.