By Jan Schultz
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For a second year, moisture recorded in Imperial increased from the year before, by about an inch and a half.

For 2008, a total of 22.77 inches fell within the Imperial city limits, compared to 21.31 inches for 2007.

While it can't compare to the summer 2007 moisture, the growing seasons and summer months of 2008 had plentiful rainfall, the most coming in May with 4.48 inches. Coincidentally, those 4.48 inches matched exactly the amount falling in May, 2007.

Looking at the other summer months, August was next highest with 3.57 inches followed by June with 3.29 inches. However, some unseasonable snowfall in October helped that month to tally 2.60 inches of moisture, making it the fourth highest month for moisture last year.

November proved to be a very snowy month after 10.5 inches fell on Nov. 10. But, three spring months also had snow, with seven inches coming in March, four inches in April and three inches in May.

June was the month with the most days of recorded moisture. Fourteen dates that month showed measured rain. The most on one day fell June 4 with 1.94 inches.

However, with all the June moisture came storms, dropping hail in all areas of the county. Baseball-sized hail hit Champion, along with tornadoes, in an early June storm. Other areas reported hail up to softball size.

In a recap of the annual weather picture by this newspaper, moisture levels are always the big topic.

The past two years of increased moisture have been welcomed after several years with totals only in the teens.

For drought-stricken 2002, only 9.38 inches of moisture was recorded, which remains the lowest of 114 years of weather record-keeping here.

The driest month of 2008 was January when only .02 inch of moisture was recorded.

More hot extremes in 2008

The year 2008 saw five days that hit or eclipsed the 100-degree mark. That's up considerably from only one day over 100 in 2007.

The warmest day in 2008 came on Aug. 2 when the mercury climbed to 110 degrees.

Other days at or above 100 degrees were Aug. 3, July 20 and July 23, all at 101 degrees. July 28 also climbed to 100 degrees.

There were fewer days below zero last year, but the coldest day on Dec. 14 of minus 18 was a full eight degrees lower than 2007's low of minus 10.

Nine other days dropped to minus readings in 2007.

Statistics for this story are used from Cory Schuller, who monitors temperatures and moisture for the National Weather Service. Schuller provides the weekly weather report for The Imperial Republican.