



SOURCE: NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, NORTH PLATE. CHART: CHRIS FOLEY

By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

While it wasn't the lowest on record, moisture totals for 2012 came dangerously close. It was no surprise to most people in the area, especially Chase County's farmers and ranchers, that 2012 will be remembered for its lack of moisture and extreme heat.

As the news staff compiled moisture and temperature highs and lows for the past year, two big things stand out:

- 1) At 12.51 inches, 2012 was the driest of the past 10 years since the all-time record low moisture of 2002, and
- 2) Twenty-two days hit 100 degrees or higher. That's more than the five previous years combined when only 13 days (from 2007 to 2011) saw 100 degree or better temps.

April was the wettest month of the year, and actually received about 38 percent of the year's total moisture when the month recorded 4.73 inches.

No moisture fell in November, and January 2012 only recorded .12 of an inch.

In all, the year's moisture was well below half of the 26.67 inches recorded in 2011.

In addition, 2012 broke a string of five straight years when moisture increased from the previous year.

Hot, hot summer

During June, July and August, Imperial's official temperatures showed 22 days with 100 degrees or hotter.

That's a stark contrast to the five previous years that recorded only a combined 13 days of 100-plus readings: 2011 had four, 2010 had three, none in 2009, five in 2008 and just one in 2007.

The hottest day of 2012 came on June 26 at 110 degrees.

June had seven days at the 100 mark or better, July had 11 including six consecutive days at 100-plus (July 19-24) and August finished with four 100 degree or hotter days.

On the other end, Christmas Day 2012 had the coldest temperatures of the year when it dipped to -12 degrees overnight.

January 2012 recorded the next lowest cold temperatures with -5 degrees on three days that month (Jan. 17, 18, 19).

Moisture totals 2002-2012

2002—9.38”(lowest on record)

2003—15.11”

2004—13.03”

2005—16.40”

2006—16.55”

2007—21.31”

2008—22.77”

2009—26.27”

2010—26.39”

2011—26.67”

2012—12.51”