

## 2009 experiences wild weather

Written by Chris Lee

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Some of the wettest months in recent years were experienced by residents of Phillips County this past year as large amounts of rain and snow covered the area.

One example many remember was the night of June 1 when nearly 3.5 inches of rain fell within a 12-hour window. It was reported six inches fell about 12 miles south of Holyoke as a result of that same storm.

The skies turned black around 7 p.m. and by 7 a.m. the next morning, things were soaked with large amounts of rain.

2009 brought just over 40 inches of snow and a day when the mercury fell to minus 17 degrees. Another unusual twist to the 2009 weather pattern was the thermometer never hit triple digits. The hottest day recorded by National Weather Service official weather observer Dan Kafka was Aug. 3 when the high was 98 degrees.

Kafka reported daily highs and lows, as well as precipitation and snowfall for the area.

The 40 inches of snow was 18 more than a year ago and 14 more than 2007.

Just under 13 inches of snow had already fallen during the first three months of the year.

January began the unusual pattern when a low of minus 2 was recorded on Jan. 28. Five days earlier a monthly high of 69 was recorded.

February followed that same pattern when just three days apart, a high of 70 and low of 5 were recorded.

Moisture was no stranger to the area as 27.15 inches of precipitation was recorded in 2009. That amount was nearly eight inches more than both 2007 and 2008 which saw just over 19 inches of moisture.

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Summer temperatures continued to be cool as the average monthly high never climbed over 84 degrees. July 2008 registered a monthly average high of 92. The 2009 yearly average high was 62 while the low was 34.

### **Crops take hit from summer storms**

Wheat farmers were loving the cooler temperatures and rainfall during the early summer months but on the night of Thursday, June 18, area farmers watched as a hail storm nailed cropland.

Around 10:30 p.m. on that Thursday night, a storm rolled into the area and destroyed nearly 3,000 acres of wheat out of the 104,000 planted acres. Another 60,000 acres were damaged for a production loss of 1,206,000 bushel or \$5,788,800. More severe storms followed further hurting farmers.

June proved to be the wettest month with just under seven inches of rain falling.

### **Early snowfall leads to cold winter**

Friday, Oct. 10 marked the first snowstorm of the fall as three inches of the white stuff fell. More storms hit the area throughout the winter months with some cancelling school, sporting events and making driving conditions poor.

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Almost 14 inches of snow fell in October. The early snowfall began a push that would stall corn harvest until late November.

October snowfall for both 2007 and 2008 totaled just over an inch.