



Texas CoCoRaHS Lone Star Roundup

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A Big Texas Welcome...

Troy M. Kimmel, Jr.
CoCoRaHS State Coordinator (Contact me: tkimmel@mail.utexas.edu)

As we get ready to head into the summer months of 2009, it is my pleasure to write this note introducing you to our quarterly newsletter for Texas CoCoRaHS!

Texas CoCoRaHS is a team effort that comes from the hard work of our colleagues at CoCoRaHS "Headquarters" at Colorado State University, Bill Runyon of Wallingford Software (our Assistant State Coordinator), our Texas regional and county coordinators and, most importantly, the daily rainfall, hail and snow (when cold enough!!) observations from our many Texas volunteer observers. All I can say is thank you to each and every one of you for your efforts towards CoCoRaHS observations and activities.

Where are we headed in the future? Please look closely at Bill Runyon's article in this edition of the newsletter (on page 2) where he gives you some of the "facts" (Bill loves numbers!!) regarding our Texas program. A couple of things come from Bill's computations. First, we need to make a push to get observers to report rainfall, even when that rainfall amount is 0.00". In addition, importantly, remember that you can send multi-day reports for those times when you're on vacation or simply away from the rain gauge for a few days. Secondly, while we are growing more and more every day, we still have 65 counties in Texas where we still don't have CoCoRaHS observers. Let's get the word out about our program and how easy it is to become a CoCoRaHS observer. Here are a couple of on line documents that can help...

Texas "How to Get Started" in CoCoRaHS...
<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/grg/kimmel/cocorahs.tx.pdf>

National CoCoRaHS Brochure...
http://www.cocorahs.org/Media/docs/CoCoRaHS_Brochure_2007.pdf

The bottom line? Let's spread the word out to other folks in the state and let them know how important this precipitation information is to everyone and, in addition, how easy it is for others to become involved in CoCoRaHS in Texas. It's true that we don't provide the rain gauge (we ask you to purchase and maintain your own) and we don't cut paychecks for our observers, but we, as a volunteer team, provide critical, potentially life saving information to our partners in the National Weather Service, the local/national media and emergency management officials. Storm reports (excessive rainfall reports and hail reports) from the National Weather Service are increasingly originating from our Texas CoCoRaHS observers.

Again, thanks for all that each of you do for the Texas CoCoRaHS program in Texas. If there is anything that we, in the state "office," can do for you, let us know!!

Numbers, Numbers and More Numbers...



Bill Runyon
CoCoRaHS Assistant State Coordinator
(Contact me: wrunyon@wallingfordsoftware.com)

It's official and in the record books! The annual CoCoRaHS March Madness competition challenging all CoCoRaHS-participating states across the USA in a recruitment effort to see which state will take top honors has just finished up! Unlike last year, when South Carolina edged the Lone Star State for the honors, this year, Texas took the honor by an overwhelming margin. Congratulations to all that participated in this recruitment effort!! The top ten states are listed below along with their March Madness final total.

1. Texas	86
2. California	41
2. Kansas	41
3. Vermont	40
4. South Carolina	34
5. Ohio	33
6. Massachusetts	31
7. Indiana	30
8. Illinois	27
9. Michigan	25
10. Tennessee	20

Interesting Facts about the Texas CoCoRaHS Program

The Austin/San Antonio/Del Rio Region took top honors statewide in the 2009 March Madness Competition with the greatest number of new recruits! Congratulations to Mark Lenz, Steve Smart and all others from that region that have helped in the recruitment effort!!

Daily Reports from Texas CoCoRaHS stations often pass Colorado in number (Colorado has been actively reporting to CoCoRaHS since 1997).

The number of reports received daily across Texas average over 500! (One third of Texas CoCoRaHS members are reporting daily ~ we need to work toward getting the other 2/3 reporting, too)

Twice during March 2009, the number of daily reports from Texas CoCoRaHS stations topped out at more than 700. The highest was 716 on March 12th!

In closing, I would like to urge each and every CoCoRaHS member to consider submitting a daily report - especially if it is ZERO. The recent heavy rain has helped some of the drought stricken areas in the state. However, your CoCoRaHS reports are used now to track the drought and that is how important this program has become and the recognition that has been gained by our network. Please understand the Zero or T for Trace are just as important now as actual rainfall accumulation. It won't be long before summer is upon us and the drought continues for many areas within the state.

Thanks again for your involvement in CoCoRaHS in Texas!!

Texas CoCoRaHS News Briefs

From Greg Story, Dallas/Fort Worth/Temple/Waco Regional Coordinator...
(contact me: Greg.Story@noaa.gov)

The Roofing Industry Committee on Weather Issues, Inc. (RICOWI) is asking for CoCoRaHS participation in another hail study in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex this spring. The primary focus is on the more densely populated areas, so we have asked for volunteers from east of Weatherford to north of Cleburne and south of Denton and McKinney to west of Rockwall. Hail season has already begun in north Texas, as some of the area saw on March 30, and runs through about June 30. The hail investigation program was actually first launched during the spring of 2004 in the Oklahoma City area. RICOWI conducted a study last spring, too, in the DFW metroplex, but there were virtually no hail storms.

Like last year, RICOWI requested CoCoRaHS involvement in this hail study by asking observers to install hail pads on facilities and residences in this area. As you recall from the CoCoRaHS training, hail pads are used for hail monitoring and research, and are built from foam and foil. The pads and the plywood holders have been supplied to CoCoRaHS observers courtesy of Haag Engineering, who is located near DFW airport in Irving, Texas, for this study. RICOWI is most interested in hail events where hail stones of 1.50 inches in diameter or greater strike observers hail pad which cause significant damage. However, they are also interested in hail size ranges of 0.50 to 1.50 inches in diameter to help identify the threshold hailstorm size for various roofing products and the resultant minor damage that occurs. Following a hail storm, the hail pads will be collected by Haag Engineering for initial analysis, then will be sent to CoCoRaHS for final archiving.

If you are interested in more information on this project, please notify the North Texas Coordinator via email at: Greg.Story@noaa.gov . For additional information, please visit the following web site: <http://www.ricowi.com/frontEnd/content.htm?id=9>

From Steve Smart and Mark Lenz, Austin/San Antonio/Del Rio Regional Co-Coordiators...
(Contact us: steve.smart@noaa.gov / mark.lenz@noaa.gov)

We have created a CoCoRaHS newsletter specifically for our area. You can see it online at.. http://www.srh.noaa.gov/images/ewx/CoCoRaHS_Newsletter.pdf

From Greg Story, Dallas/Fort Worth/Temple/Waco Regional Coordinator...
(contact me: Greg.Story@noaa.gov)

On Saturday, April 18, 2009 a second day of intense rainfall moved across southeast Texas. The National Weather Service's West Gulf River Forecast Center (WGRFC) was already dealing with flooding from the previous days rain when on that Friday over 8 inches of rain fell over Fayette County. But a second area of thunderstorms developed close to the same area, and were headed east roughly along I-10. The first tip the NWS got that these thunderstorms were also producing intense rainfall (similar, if not worse than, the previous day) came from a CoCoRaHS observer in Fort Bend county. This observer sent in an intense rainfall report, which the WGRFC received around 2:15 PM that afternoon (we have the CoCoRaHS intense rainfall and hail reports alarm at our workstations). The observers there told us he had received over 6 inches of rain in a short amount of time. In the comments section he indicated that the flooding there was the worst since tropical storm Allison. Believe me, that got our attention!

Not only did that tell me that I'd better make sure my precipitation processing software had that amount of rain in that location, it told me what kind of rain rates the atmosphere was capable of producing. Had it not been for this CoCoRaHS report, we may have been in for a huge surprise when the rain moved into Houston! As it turned out, we were ready with what happened next.

(continued on next page)

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Tremendous rainfall rates and rainfall totals occurred over the Houston metropolitan area. The two day total exceeded 14 inches in a few spots. Clover field in Pearland reported 1.33 inches of rain in just 12 minutes! Houston Hobby airport received a record 5.15 inches for the date, with 0.96 inches falling in just 10 minutes...1.48 inches in 16 minutes...and 2.52 inches in just 35 minutes.

The Harris County Flood control gage at Bay Area Boulevard and Clear Creek indicated that an incredible 6.26 inches of rain fell in one hour...8.06 inches of rain fell in 90 minutes, and 9.92 inches of rain accumulated in 24 hours. Another gage at Clear Creek and FM 528 showed 6.02 inches of rain in one hour. These hourly rainfall rates are comparable to the rainfall rates that occurred with Tropical storm Allison. In fact, the 0.71 of an inch in 1 minute at the gauge at Willow Spring at Fairmont Parkway is within 0.5 inch of the US 1-minute rainfall record and given the limitations of the tipping bucket it could possibly have been closer to .8 or .9 of an inch in 1 minute. The gage site at Clear Creek at Bay Area Boulevard which had the 6.90 inches in 1 hour exceeded the 1 hour totals of Tropical Storm Allison, which had 6.30 inches in 1 hour and almost exceeded the nearly 9.0 inches (8.92 inches) in 90 minutes.

The highest CoCoRaHS observations the WGRFC received for the 24 period were TXGV04 with 10.63 inches (League City 1.2 N); TXGV15 with 10.02 inches (League City 1.7 NW); and TXGV14 with 9.17 inches (League City 2.4 W). Those of us at the National Weather Service want to thank all the CoCoRaHS observers for your volunteer efforts. You are a great assistance to us!!

We want to hear from you!! Coordinators and observers, please submit any and all happenings.. including pictures.. in an email to Troy Kimmel at tkimmel@mail.utexas.edu .

Yes... Hail Size Does Count!!!



State coordinator Troy Kimmel observed this hail about 5:45pm on Wednesday / 25 March 2009 - over 2 inches in diameter!! This information was relayed by the on line "CoCoRaHS" hail report template to the National Weather Service Austin-San Antonio and this is what the NWS storm report looked like...

0545 PM HAIL 3 SSW JOLLYVILLE 30.41N 97.77W
03/25/2009 M2.50 INCH TRAVIS TX COCORAHS

COCORAHS OBSERVER REPORTED CAR DAMAGE FROM TENNIS BALL SIZE HAIL.

Your CoCoRaHS reports do make a difference!!

A Big Thank You...

to Steve Smart, one of our regional co-coordinators for the Austin/San Antonio/Del Rio Area (and Observation Program Leader) from the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Austin-San Antonio who, on his own time, designed our Texas CoCoRaHS Logo that you see on the front page of this newsletter.

Thanks, Steve, to your dedication to CoCoRaHS in Texas and your hard work in designing our new logo!!

Did You Know???

The top ten counties in Texas with the most CoCoRaHS observers are...

Bexar County (San Antonio metro area) - 138 observers
 Travis County (Austin metro area) - 87 observers
 Williamson County - 71 observers
 Tarrant County (Fort Worth metro area) - 57 observers
 Kendall County - 50 observers (tie)
 Comal County - 50 observers (tie)
 Guadalupe County - 44 observers (tie)
 Harris County (Houston metro area) - 44 observers (tie)
 Cameron County (Brownsville/Harlingen metro area) - 40 observers
 Brazos County (Bryan/College Station metro area) - 39 observers

All Points Bulletin!!!

Calling all potential CoCoRaHS observers...

These are the 65 counties in Texas where we do not have any volunteer observers (as of 21 April 2009):

Andrews	Angelina	Baylor	Borden	Bosque
Camp	Carson	Cass	Cochran	Comanche
Cottle	Crosby	Culberson	Dawson	Delta
Dickens	Donley	Ector	Fannin	Foard
Gaines	Hamilton	Hardeman	Hartley	Haskell
Hemphill	Hill	Howard	Irion	Jim Hogg
Kent	King	Knox	Lamar	Lamb
Loving	Lynn	Martin	Menard	Mitchell
Motley	Nolan	Ochiltree	Oldham	Panola
Parmer	Presidio	Reagan	Red River	Reeves
Roberts	Robertson	San Augustine	San Jacinto	Starr
Sterling	Terry	Titus	Trinity	Waller
Ward	Wilbarger	Winkler	Yoakum	Zapata

There are many more with only 1 or 2 stations...

Visiting Fayette County and KVLG/KBUK Radio

Danny Zitterich (we just call him Danny Z!!) and the good folks at KVLG/KBUK Radio in LaGrange, TX, invited CoCoRaHS to come down and recruit their radio station rain gauge network to become CoCoRaHS observers on Friday, May 5 2009. Area regional coordinator Mark Lenz along with Bryan-College Station Area Regional Coordinator (and Texas State Climatologist) Dr. John Nielsen-Gammon and Travis and Williamson County Coordinator Bob Rose (Chief Meteorologist, LCRA) and state coordinator Troy Kimmel joined the group at the radio studios and recruited 15 new CoCoRaHS observers for the greater LaGrange and Fayette County area. Welcome aboard new observers from LaGrange and Fayette County!!



CoCoRaHS in Texas

National Website: www.cocorahs.org

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Amarillo Region...

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El Paso Region...

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Abilene/San Angelo Region...

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Dallas/Fort Worth/Waco/Temple Region...

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Corpus Christi/Victoria/Laredo Region...

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Brownsville/McAllen Region...

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Bryan-College Station/Brazos Valley Region...

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Houston/Galveston Region...

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Beaumont/Golden Triangle Region...

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