

SEVERE WEATHER

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That year, the jet stream moved north and "essentially shut down" tornadoes in the American Midwest said Greg Carbin, warning meteorologist at the federal storm center. A tremendous drought meant far fewer storms, which not only shut off the spigot on rain but on storm cells that spawned tornadoes.

Typically, 1,300 tornadoes strike the U.S. a year. There were nearly 1,700 tornadoes in 2011, falling short of the record 1,817 tornadoes set in 2004.

Tornado record-keepers tally things like the most and least tornadoes in a month. Records for that category have been set 24 times over the past 60 years.

Ten of those records have been set in the past decade — six for the fewest tornadoes and four for the most. Also, the three earliest starts of tornado season and the four latest have all occurred since 1997, he said.

Brownfield Emergency Man-

agement Coordinator Mitch McElroy said the city is prepared for severe weather, but residents need to be ready as well.

"The most important thing to do during storm season is stay alert and stay informed," McElroy told the Brownfield News. "Get a weather radio and if it looks bad outside, turn it on. Those little things save lives and they're cheap enough, there is no reason not to have one."

In addition to personal weather radios, citizens can depend on the city's advance alert system, which sounds tornado sirens anytime a funnel is nearing the community.

New sirens were installed in recent years near the Brownfield ISD Administration Building and at the intersection of Reppito and Howell streets and another went up this month on Tahoka Rd. near D Street.

McElroy said testing would begin this week and continue through storm season. The

sirens are tested at noon every Monday, so long as the weather is clear to avoid the confusion of false alerts.

The city has a new alert system that all residents can register for online.

The SPURS Resident Communication Registry will send text messages or e-mails to everyone who signs up for the free service.

In the event a tornado does strike the community, McElroy said it is best to stay put if conditions are safe.

"If you're not in immediate danger and everybody with you is alright, just stay there and we'll find you," he said. "Walking around or driving around, you'll either get in the way of emergency responders or you'll get hurt on debris or live electric lines."

"Our city is prepared for that situation," he continued. "We have a good bunch of law enforcement and emergency responders and a great hospital staff that will take care of everybody. I hope it never happens, but we're ready if it does."

Being prepared for tornados and other severe weather includes having a small stockpile of necessities and enough supplies to last three days.

Canned food and water, blankets and flashlights are important to have.

A new study in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society looks at all sorts of extreme weather, how it is changing because of global warming and how things are predicted to change in the future. The study says tornadoes and the severe thunderstorms that spawn them are the hardest to predict.

One reason scientists can't figure out how global warming might affect tornadoes is that twisters are usually small weather events that aren't easily simulated in large computer models.

And records of tornadoes may not have been accurate over the years as twisters twirled

unnoticed around unpopulated areas.

Increasing dry conditions may also lead to a high fire danger throughout this spring season.

The persistent dry and mild weather is not good news for the already drought-stricken West Texas.

A new seasonal drought outlook calls for the U.S. drought to persist or develop even more in the areas that have suffered the most from low precipitation over the past year — the Southwest, Texas, the Southern Rockies, and the High Plains, as well as in Southern Georgia, Alabama, and Florida — at least through the end of April.

West Texas and southeastern New Mexico could expect "above average" temperatures, quoting the NWS' three month outlook forecast on Monday, while saying precipitation chances remained "below average," according to outlook models.

The U.S. Drought Outlook, a product of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, uses a combination of short- and medium-term forecasts, long-term climate models, and several other climatological benchmarks, such as soil moisture, to predict how drought conditions will change over the coming months regionally.

Across the lower 48 states, 56.84 percent of the land area is under drought conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, a shift down from the 57.68 percent reported last week.

FORGERY

An investigation of the complaint led detectives in Mendez' direction and eventually to form a warrant for his arrest. Sheriff's deputies served it at the Lubbock County Detention Center, where he was being held on an unrelated charge in that city.

They returned the suspect to the Terry County Jail for booking procedures. He remains behind bars as of press time in lieu of a \$35,000 total bond.

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PUBLISHER
Lynn Brisendine
publisher@brownfieldonline.com

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Russ McKee
ads@brownfieldonline.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Mattie Garcia
classifieds@brownfieldonline.com

NEWS EDITOR
Brian Brisendine
news@brownfieldonline.com

STAFF WRITER
Josie Musico
sports@brownfieldonline.com

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STYLE SHOW

from infant to retired. Backstage, they scrambled to change into new outfits and keep up with the show.

Meanwhile, the mostly-female audience dined on salads provided by Red Skirts members while "oohing" and "ahhing" at the attractive fashions and catching up with other guests.

"We always look forward to the fellowship and seeing our friends in the community," said volunteer Cathy Pope.

Fellow Red Skirt Joy Osborn agreed, "We're having a blast."

The Red Skirts is the women's division of the Brownfield Chamber of Commerce. For information about joining, please call 637-2564.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Campus principals updated the board about student progress and specific areas in which they seemed to be still struggling, and about how they were working to meet rising state and federal academic standards.

"We have to get students accustomed to that growth and that rigor," said Middle School Principal Michelle Cooper.

They also cancelled Position 1 of their upcoming election because incumbent Rocha is running unopposed and approved a series of budget amendments. Those included \$82,000 for new computer labs at High School, Oak Grove, Colonial Heights and Discipline Alternative Education Placement; \$15,000 to replace the outside doors at BHS and BMS and \$55,000 for a salary and supplies for a second school resource officer.

Assistant Superintendent Steve Osborn announced that he was currently interviewing for the SRO position, and would likely give the board a new-hire recommendation during their April meeting.

WEATHER

Winter Storm Warning -- Hazardous winter weather conditions that pose a threat to life and/or property are occurring, imminent, or highly likely. The generic term, winter storm warning, is used for a combination of two or more of the following winter weather events: heavy snow, freezing rain, sleet, and strong winds.[10] The Heavy Snow Warning and Sleet Warning have been deprecated in favor of issuing the Winter Storm Warning for Heavy Snow and Winter Storm Warning for Heavy Sleet, respectively.

Winter Storm Watch -- Hazardous winter weather conditions including significant accumulations of snow and/or freezing rain and/or sleet are possible generally within 48 hours. These watches are issued by the Weather Service Forecast Office.

Winter Weather Advisory -- Hazardous winter weather conditions are occurring, imminent, or likely. Conditions will cause a significant inconvenience and if caution is not exercised, may result in a potential threat to life and/or property. The generic term, winter weather advisory, is used for a combination of two or more of the following events: snow, freezing rain or freezing drizzle, sleet, and blowing snow.[12] The Snow Advisory, and Blowing Snow Advisory have been deprecated in favor of issuing the Winter Weather advisory for Snow and the Winter Weather Advisory for Snow and Blowing Snow, respectively.

Red Flag Warning -- A warning issued when conditions are favorable for the rapid spread of wildfires.

Fire Weather Watch -- Conditions are expected to become favorable for the rapid spread of wildfires.

Excessive Heat Warning -- Extreme heat index making it feel very hot, typically above 105 °F (41 °C) for 3 hours or more during the day for two consecutive days or above 115 °F (46 °C) at any time. Specific criteria vary over different county warning areas.

Heat Advisory -- Extreme heat index making it feel hot, typically between 105 and 110 °F (41 and 43 °C) for up to 3 hours during the day and at or above 80 °F (27 °C) at night for two consecutive nights. Specific criteria vary over different county warning areas.

Hard Freeze Warning -- Widespread temperatures at or below 28 °F (-2 °C) during the growing season. A hard freeze may occur with or without frost.

Freeze Warning -- Widespread temperatures at or below 32 °F (0 °C) during the growing season. A freeze may occur with or without frost.

Frost Advisory -- Widespread frost during the growing season. Frost generally occurs with fair skies and light winds at temperatures at or below 36 °F (2 °C).

Dust Storm Warning -- Gale-force winds and considerable blowing sand or dust reducing visibilities to 1/4 mile or less.

Blowing Dust Advisory -- Strong winds and considerable blowing sand or dust reducing visibilities.

Dense Fog Advisory -- Widespread dense fog reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile (400 m).

Special Weather Statement -- An advisory issued when a hazard is approaching advisory level.

**Source -- NWS

Meadow bans synthetic pot

Looking to buy some fake weed?

Don't bother trying to find it legally in Terry County.

Meadow on Tuesday morning became the latest South Plains city to ban the use, sale and possession of synthetic marijuana, sold by brand names such as K2 and Spice. The ordinance went into effect immediately following a 4-0 City Council vote.

As with the town's other laws, the ban will be enforced by the Terry County Sheriff's Department because Meadow does not have a municipal police department.

City Attorney Mike Guevara told the *Brownfield News* that although synthetic marijuana had not seemed to be an overwhelming concern in Meadow, placing the ban could deter future use and remind potential users of the drug's dangers.

"It's mostly a preemptive measure," he said. "It's really about

awareness."

Brownfield, Lubbock, Levelland and many other South Plains cities have enacted similar prohibitions on the substance, which Guevara said his research has determined it to be a significant health risk.

"This stuff is more dangerous than some illegal narcotics," he said. "It's becoming a really big issue. The biggest concern is school-age children."

City Council initially discussed the proposed ban during closed session of their February meeting before they formally adopted it Tuesday.

In other business that morning, they tabled an agenda item regarding a contract with Terry County for partial funding of their volunteer fire department. City Administrator Terri McClanahan said she was still waiting for a response from the county to the city's proposed contract.

Cowboy Complex

USA 1



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