

Missouri Got Its Fill Of Extreme Weather In 2008

COLUMBIA, MO.

This has been one of the wettest years on record in Missouri, and there's still time for 2008 to break the record for most precipitation, said a University of Missouri Extension climatologist.

Preliminary numbers indicate that if Missouri receives more than 2.56 inches of precipitation in December, which would be only slightly above normal, 2008 will surpass 1993, which averaged 55.07 inches, said Pat Guinan, MU Extension climatologist with the Commercial Agriculture Program.

"There was an unusual number of extreme weather events in 2008," said Guinan. These include one major ice storm, two tornado events and six floods.

Most of the state received more than 50 inches of precipitation; 70 inches or more fell on parts of north-central and southwestern Missouri, he said.

Statewide average precipitation is almost 16 inches above normal, which is the largest above-normal departure in the U.S.

Significant amounts of rainfall came from a record number of tropical systems, including three hurricanes, Dolly, Gustav and Ike, plus two tropical storms, Fay and Lowell.

"2008 has also been the coldest year in more than a decade," Guinan said. Four consecutive seasons, from the winter of 2007 through the fall of 2008, saw below-normal temperatures. Only January and June recorded above-normal temperatures. The first half of December has been colder than normal.

2008 extreme weather events in Missouri

- Jan. 7-8: Tornado outbreak over southwestern Missouri; 29 tornadoes recorded.
- Feb. 11-12: Ice storm over southeastern Missouri; Cape Girardeau was hardest hit.
- March 18-19: Flooding in southern and central Missouri.
- May 10: Deadliest single tornado since 1959 causes more than a dozen fatalities in Newton County.
- June 24-25: Flooding in north-central Missouri.
- June: Flooding along the Mississippi River.
- July 24-28: Flooding in north-central Missouri.
- Sept. 3-4: Flooding in central and southern Missouri due to remnants of Hurricane Gustav.
- Sept. 11-14: Flooding over large part of Missouri due to remnants of Tropical Storm Lowell and Hurricane Ike.

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