

May 2004 Likely To Be State's Driest

By Derek Arndt

Assistant State Climatologist

The Oklahoma Climatological Survey

6/1/2004

May 2004 will probably go down as the state's driest May since modern record-keeping began in 1895. Preliminary data from the Oklahoma Mesonet show a statewide average of 1.08 inches of rain fell last month, which would break the previous low-precipitation mark of 1.30 inches, set in 1988.

Each of Oklahoma's nine climate divisions observed less than half of its normal May precipitation. These values ranged from 4% in the panhandle to 45% in the northeast. Only the central climate division set a new record for May, with 0.88 inches of precipitation (previous record: 0.96", also 1988). However, the statewide average for the month was comfortably below the previous mark because May 2004 was among the five driest Mays in history for seven of Oklahoma's nine climate divisions.

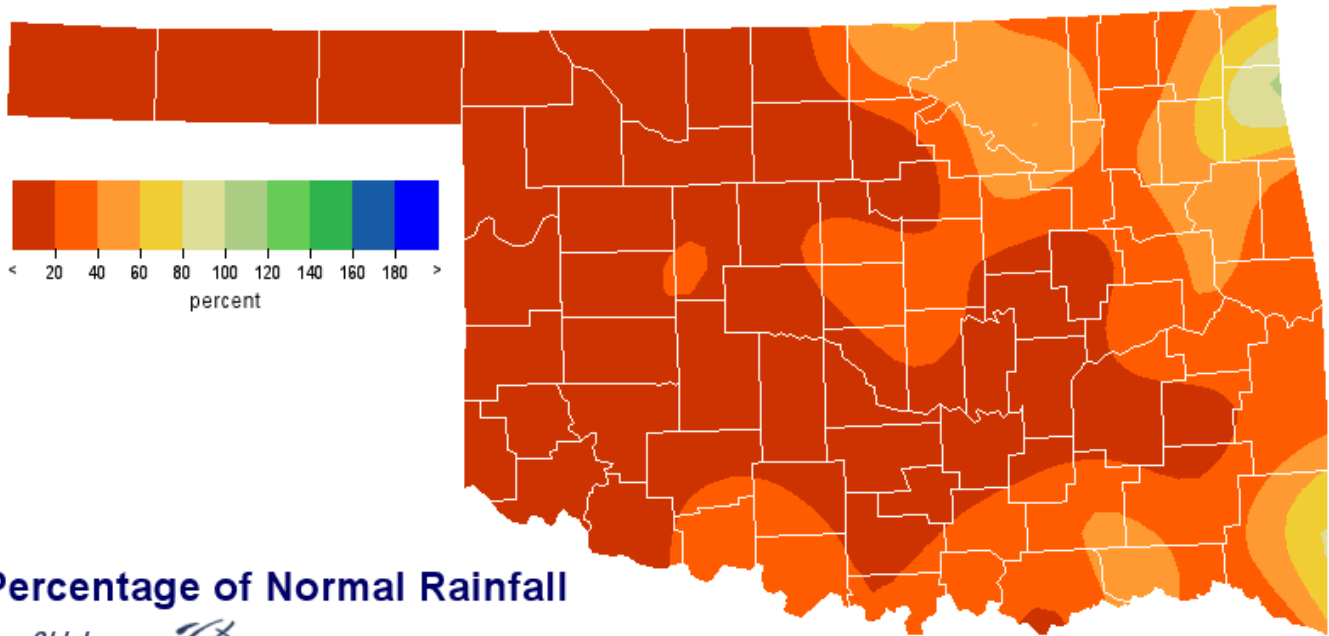
Climatologically, May is the calendar's wettest month for the vast majority of Oklahoma. This makes May departures more significant than, say, January for most interests in Oklahoma.

For related statistics and maps, see below:

May 2004 Mesonet Rainfall Statistics

Climate Division	Total Rainfall	Departure / Pct Normal	Rank since 1895 (110 periods)	Driest since	Driest on Record	May 2004 SPI
Panhandle	0.14"	-3.23" / 4%	3rd Driest	1927 (0.00")	0.00" (1927)	-3.37
N. Central	0.67"	-4.05" / 14%	3rd Driest	1970 (0.58")	0.25" (1924)	-2.17
Northeast	2.46"	-3.02" / 45%	16th Driest	1996 (2.38")	1.38" (1917)	-1.27
W. Central	0.36"	-4.54" / 7%	4th Driest	1927 (0.00")	0.00" (1924,27)	-2.52
Central	0.88"	-4.75" / 16%	Driest	--	0.96" (1988)	-2.39
E. Central	1.52"	-4.37" / 26%	3rd Driest	1941 (1.25")	1.50" (1932)	-1.98
Southwest	0.42"	-4.55" / 8%	2nd Driest	1984	0.38" (1984)	-2.53

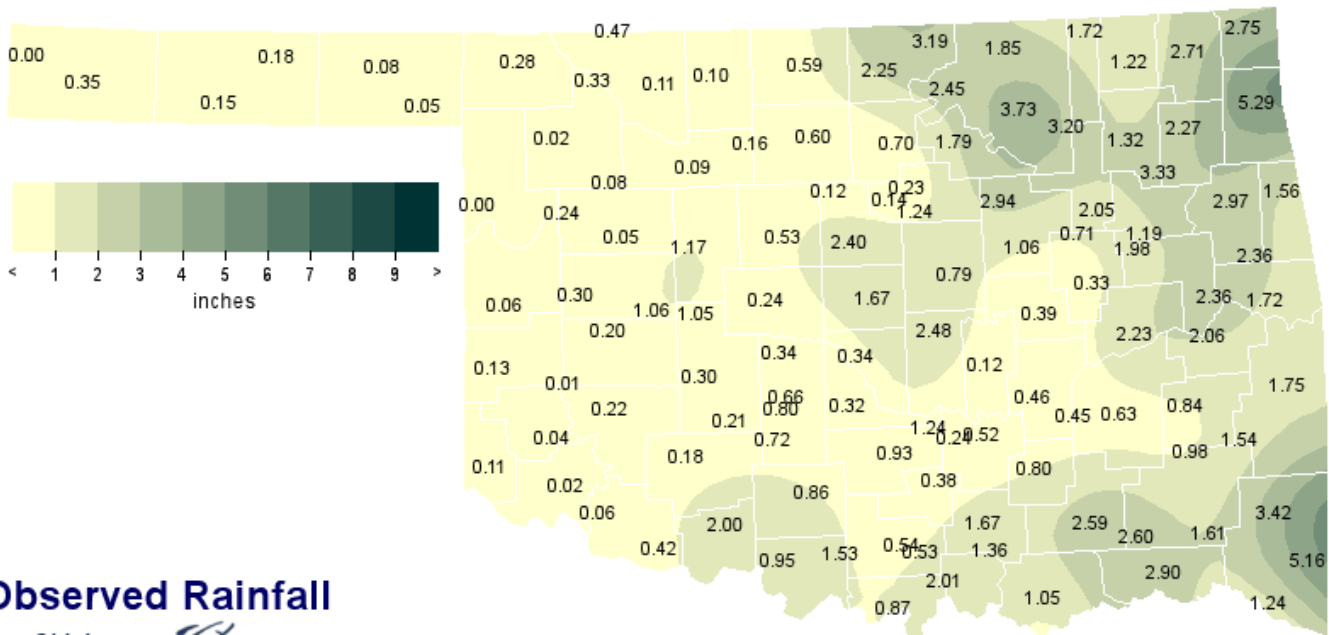
				(0.38")		
S. Central	1.06"	-4.54" / 19%	4th Driest	1998 (0.94")	0.46" (1988)	-2.10
Southeast	2.20"	-4.16" / 35%	7th Driest	1988 (1.55")	1.24" (1963)	-1.64
Statewide	1.08"	-4.13" / 21%	Driest	--	1.30" (1988)	-2.53



Percentage of Normal Rainfall

Oklahoma Climatological Survey  May 2004
May 1, 2004 through May 31, 2004

Copyright (c) 2004 Oklahoma Climatological Survey. All rights reserved. Rainfall data collected by Oklahoma Mesonet. image created 10:33 CDT Jun 1, 2004



Observed Rainfall

Oklahoma Climatological Survey  May 2004
May 1, 2004 through May 31, 2004

Copyright (c) 2004 Oklahoma Climatological Survey. All rights reserved. Rainfall data collected by Oklahoma Mesonet. image created 10:33 CDT Jun 1, 2004

Media Contact:

For Additional Information:

Cerry Leffler
Oklahoma Climatological Survey
100 E. Boyd, Suite 1210
Norman, OK 73019-1012
405-325-2451
405-325-2550 (fax)
cerry@ou.edu

Derek Arndt
Assistant State Climatologist
100 E. Boyd, Suite 1210
Norman, OK 73019-1012
405-325-2541
405-325-2550 (fax)
darndt@ou.edu