

from the DMN editorial "blog"

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## There ought to be a better word in Texas ...

... than "drought." I mean, we need something that says, "Regularly scheduled prolonged dry spell." That would capture the essence.



Consider the clips from years past about dry spells just in Dallas:

-- From Feb. 3, 1986, a story about a thundershower:

The rain ended 50 days of drought in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, as officials recorded a measurable amount of drizzle -- albeit only a fraction of an inch. ... The Dallas area's fourth-longest dry spell officially ended at about 9 p.m. Sunday when 0.05 inches of rain was recorded at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

-- From Dec. 8, 1988:

If 1983 is remembered as the year of the big chill, 1988 definitely has earned a place in the history book as the year of the big drought. The global greenhouse effect may be causing oceans to swell, but the lack of rainfall is contributing to low water problems in some Texas lakes, including several in the Dallas area.

-- From July 24, 1993:

Seems like it hasn't rained in weeks. Well, it hasn't, and Dallasites have the yellow lawns, wilting begonias and soaring utility bills to prove it. ... Dry spells are fairly typical for North Texas. They just usually don't last this long. ... If another week passes without rain -- forecasters see none in the near future -- it'll be the area's first ever bone-dry July, even drier than July 1909, whose 0.02 of an inch was barely enough to cover a bucket bottom. ...

National Weather Service meteorologist David Martin [said], "Two years ago we had the wettest year on record. It's a cyclical-type thing. We have dry years and wet years."

-- From May 25, 1996:

If it doesn't rain by June 1, the Dallas-Fort Worth area will record its driest eight-month period in nearly 90 years, drier even than the legendary 1950s drought, according to the National Weather Service.

The only other time conditions would have been more parched is during 1908-09, said Skip Ely, meteorologist in charge of the local weather office in Fort Worth.

-- From Sept. 6, 1999, about a fish-barge owner who lost business in a dry spell:

"It's just horrible," said Mr. Collom, 61, pointing to a 25-foot expanse of sand and mud that was covered by water earlier this summer. ... Early Saturday, the area's 56th consecutive day without measurable rain, Mr. Collom brought in a backhoe to push his 24-hour-a-day, indoor-fishing barge about 15 feet out into the lake.

-- From Aug. 28, 2000:

The record for the longest local streak of dry weather was tied Sunday. And with no rain in the forecast, the record will surely be broken Monday. ... But the real news may be by how much it's broken. Sunday was the 58th consecutive day with no measurable precipitation, tying the record set in 1934 and repeated in 1950.

-- From this morning:

Dying lawns. Dehydrated reservoirs. The drought has taken its toll. ... Then it rained. The heavens dumped about an inch to an inch and a half in some areas of North Texas. Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the official record site for the region, received just 0.01 inches, the first rainfall there since July 5.