

## Weekly Climate Summary: 3/3/2024-3/9/2024

### **Climate in the News:**

As we transition into the first full week of March, the effects of the week prior can still be felt as wildfires continue to burn in the Texas Panhandle. These fires are mostly contained as of this writing on March 11, 2024, with the largest fire in Texas history, the Smokehouse Creek fire, being 87% contained. Sporadic severe weather reports were present across the state, with the most interesting being a landspout tornado in Forrester on March 5, 2024. Landspout tornadoes are close cousins to a regular tornado, yet they do not need a thunderstorm to form. These whirlwinds can form under fair weather conditions as pre-existing spin in the air is tilted vertically and tightened by the updraft of a towering cumulus cloud. The name “landspout” refers to the fact that these phenomena are birthed through a similar process as waterspouts, but over land. Typically, these vortices are relatively weak and pack winds less than 100 miles per hour, yet on occasion, they can grow strong enough to cause EF2 to EF3 damage (winds corresponding to 111-165 mph on the Enhanced Fujita Scale).



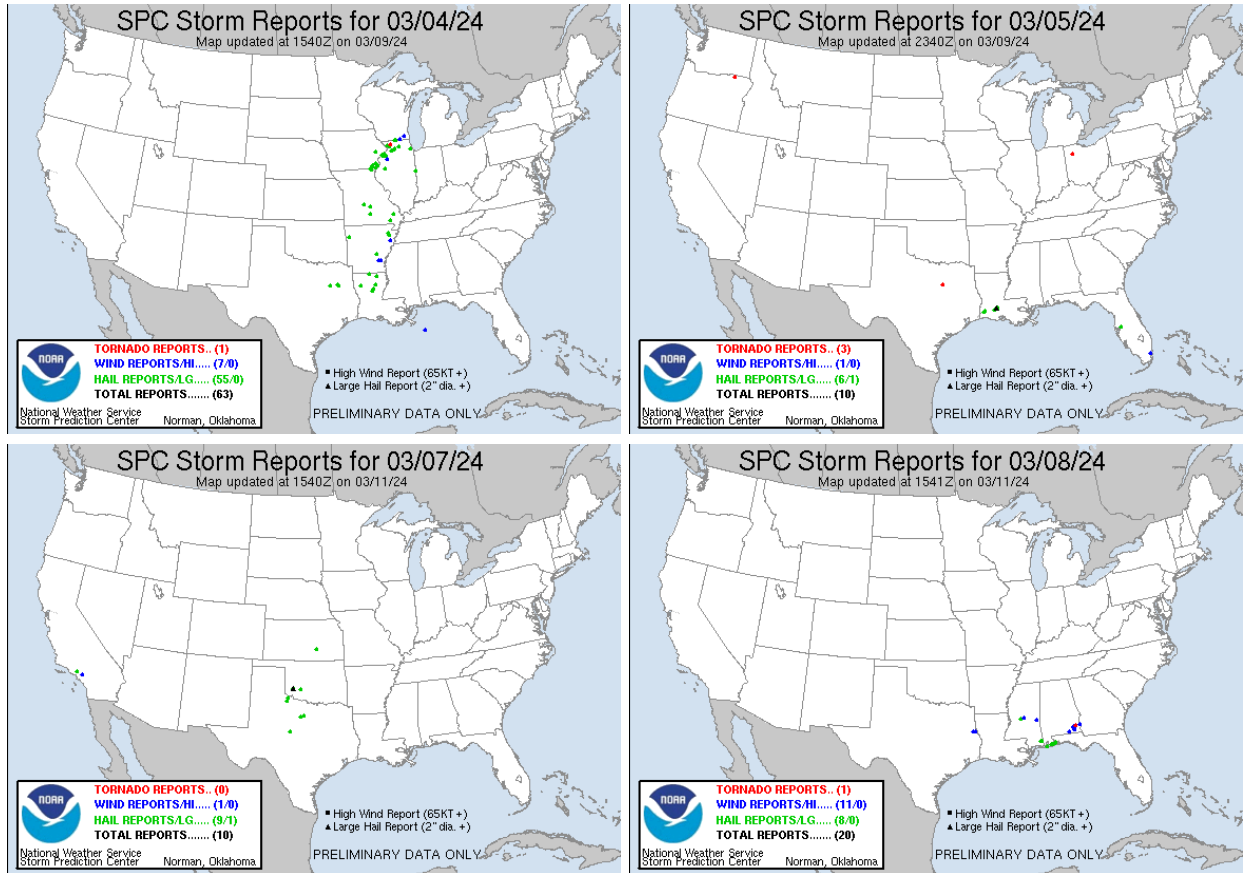
*A torched playground is left behind amidst a field of scorched Earth in Fritch, Tx in the wake of the Texas Panhandle wildfires. Courtesy: AgriLife Today, photo by Sam Craft.*



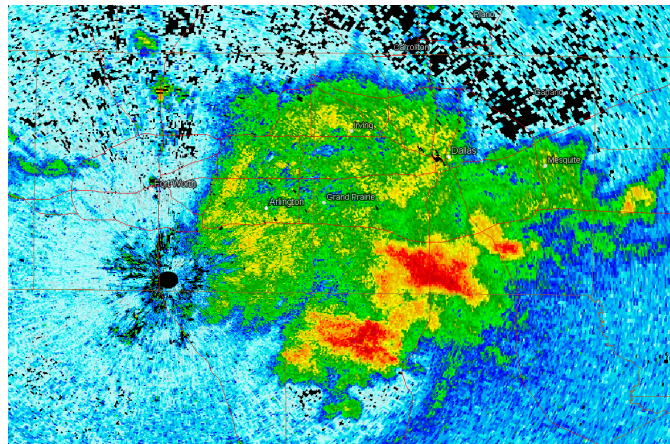
*Landspout tornado churning up dust in a rural field near Forreston, Tx. No substantial damage was reported with this tornado, resulting in no rating. Courtesy: Accuweather.com, taken from a video by Randi Stanfield.*

**Weather Synopsis:**

The weather on the week of March 3-9 was characterized by abnormal warmth with thunderstorms affecting portions of the State. Though warm, the week was cooler than the previous week. The tireless and heroic efforts by firefighters along with less volatile conditions allowed significant progress to be made on the Texas Panhandle wildfires. Thunderstorms also rumbled through portions of the State, bringing spotty severe weather. Most of the reports received by the Storm Prediction Center were hail reports, with a few wind reports and one tornado report from the landspout tornado in Forreston.



*Maps of storm reports from the Storm Prediction Center showing the days where severe weather was observed across the State of Texas. Reports consist of mainly hail reports, with three wind reports on the 8th, and the tornado report on the 5th due to a landspout tornado in Forrester. Courtesy: Storm Prediction Center*



*Image of the KFWS radar reflectivity at 10:01 pm on March 6, 2024. This cluster of storms was responsible for strong winds across the DFW Metroplex on the evening of March 6. Several airports saw gusts to near 50 mph. At 10:04 pm, DFW airport reported a peak gust to 59 mph from the south-southwest and Dallas Love Field airport reported a gust to 52 mph right at 10:00 pm. Courtesy: NOAA's Weather and Climate Toolkit*

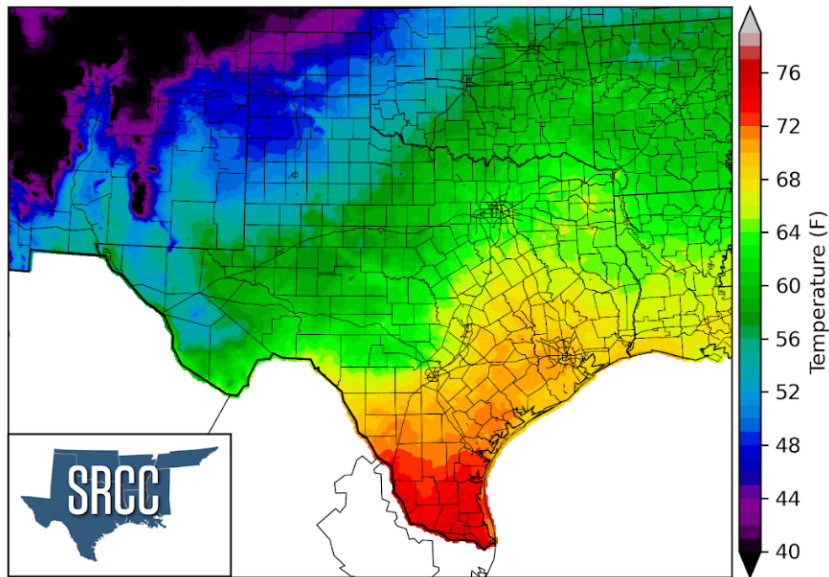


**Temperature:**

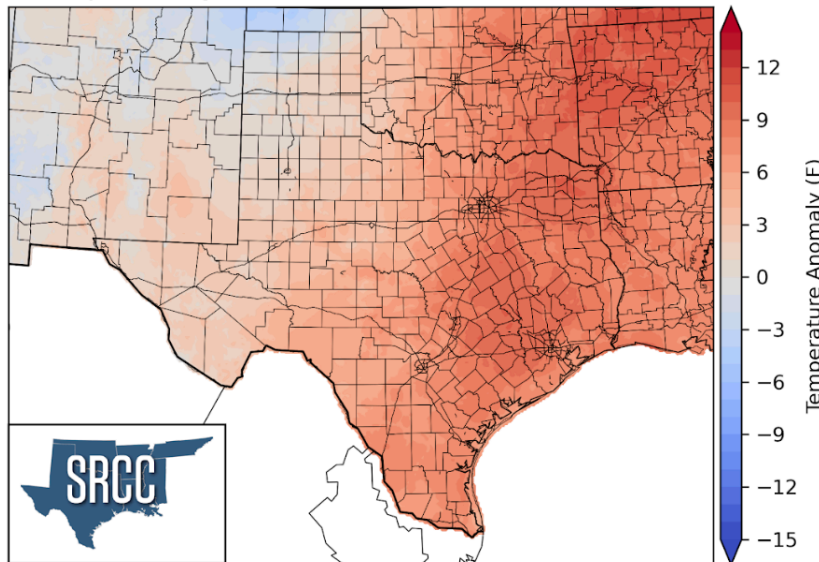
Continuing the recent stretch of warm weeks, the week of March 3-9 was above normal for virtually the entire state, except for the northern reaches of the Texas Panhandle. Average weekly temperatures across the state ranged from 45°F to 75°F, with the warmest locations being above the 75°F threshold. The statewide extremes in average weekly temperature are as follows:

- Dalhart FAA Airport in Dallam County saw the lowest weekly average at 45.9°F
- McAllen Miller International Airport in Hidalgo County saw the highest weekly average at 76.6°F

Average Temperature (F) March 3 - 9, 2024

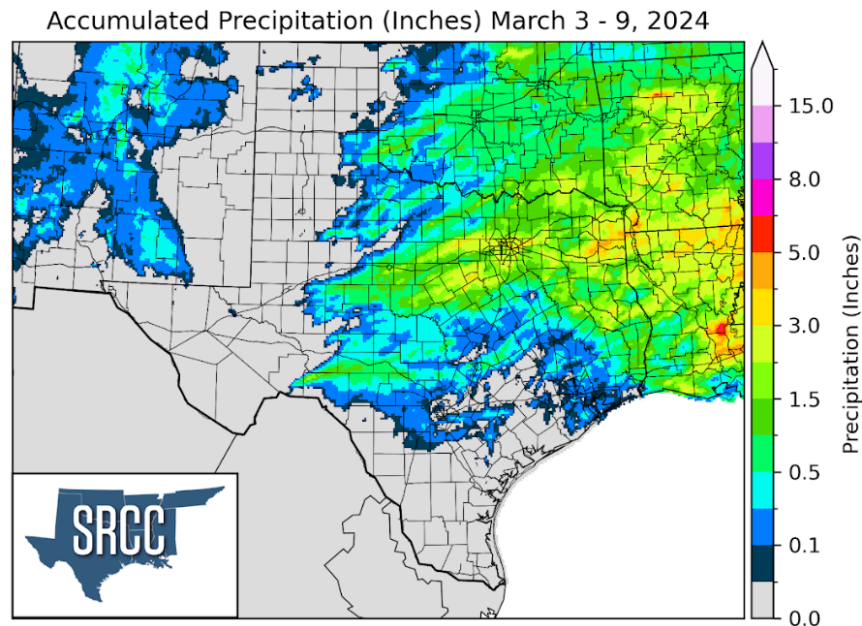


Mean Temp Anomaly (F) March 3 - 9, 2024 vs 1991-2020 Normals



**Precipitation:**

Rounds of thunderstorms, some severe, moved across portions of Texas throughout the week. This resulted in variable precipitation amounts across the state where precipitation fell. The bulk of the heavier precipitation totals were confined across the eastern and northern portions of the State.

**Statewide extremes:**

-The hottest recorded temperature of the week was 95°F at the Freer Co-op site in Bell County on March 6, 2024.

-The coldest recorded temperature of the week was 19°F at the Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge site in Bailey County on March 9, 2024 .

-The most precipitation recorded in the week of March 3-9, 2024 was 4.42” at the Avinger 6.6S CoCoRahs site in Marion County.

-75 stations broke record highs in the week of March 3-9, 2024.

-2 stations broke record lows for the same week.