

# 2007

## A YEAR OF EXTREMES

◀ WEATHER FROM E1

**January**  
January opens amid a stretch of 34 days of above average temperatures in the Twin Cities. Drought is a continuing worry; a snowless cattail swamp along Leech Lake in north central Minnesota catches fire Jan. 17, and the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon along the North Shore is postponed to February for lack of snow.

**February**  
Winter returns ... in places. The Twin Cities area sees 63 straight hours of 0 or below Feb. 2-5; the high of minus-5 on Feb. 4 is the coldest high in three years; high windchills close many schools. Winona gets socked with 28 inches of snow Feb. 23-25 and La Crosse, Wis., gets 21, its biggest single storm ever and a hint of massive precipitation outbursts to come. Rochester and Lanesboro record their snowiest Februaries ever. But on Feb. 13, John Beargrease officials cancel the event for the first time in 23 years for lack of snow along the North Shore. Twelve days later, Duluth receives 11.3 inches.

**March**  
Be careful what you ask for. Still mostly snow-deprived, much of the state gets a foot or more of snow in a Feb. 28-March 2 storm. Suburban Andover gets 20 inches, the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus closes for the first time since the epic Halloween blizzard of 1991, Duluth sees 15-foot drifts and interstate highways are closed. Warmth and flooding soon follow; more than 50 families are knocked out of their homes in Browns Valley, Minn., on March 14.

**April**  
Redwood Falls and Alexandria have the coldest first week of April on record. Brainerd gets 11 inches of snow April 2-3 and Duluth gets 12.1 on April 3, its greatest single-day April snowfall ever. More snow whumps southern Minnesota April 10-11, with Fairmont getting a daily record 8 inches.

**May**  
Perhaps the result of an unattended campfire, a forest fire near Ham Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness begins May 5 and, in dry and windy conditions, burns 119 square miles in Minnesota and Ontario, along with 140 structures. It's also hot for Mama: At least a dozen Minnesota locations report record highs on May 13, Mothers' Day, including the Twin Cities (92). The state's first tornadoes of the season, a pair of limp dishrags, really, are reported in Goodhue County on May 23.

**June**  
Statewide, it's the warmest June since 1995. The Twin Cities hit or exceed 90 nine times; the most recent official normal for the whole year is 13. And is the drought easing? Parts of northwestern Minnesota get more than 6 inches in 36 hours June 13-14. Beleaguered Browns Valley has its fourth-wettest June ever, but central Minnesota remains crackling dry.

**July**  
It's the driest July ever in Redwood Falls, second-driest in Hutchinson and Pipestone. But the Great Mosquito Shortage shows signs of ending in the Twin Cities. Rain falls on 11 days, including 1.48 inches on July 8, a half-inch short of what fell the entire month of June, the rainiest month on average.

**August**  
A climatological freak show. An aimless front stalls over southern Minnesota Aug. 17-19, ultimately resulting in the greatest 24-hour rainfall ever recorded in Minnesota (Hokah, 15.1 inches) and flash floods that kill at least seven people and leave more than \$60 million in damage. Hibbing has its driest August ever; the Twin Cities and numerous southern Minnesota stations have their wettest. Hokah records the wettest month



BRIAN PETERSON • brianp@startribune.com  
Homes in Minnesota City along Garvin Brook lost their back yards, large trees and a few garages in August when floods waters raged.



RICHARD SENNOTT • rsennott@startribune.com  
Paula Beattie and Lilean Nicolaison watch a prescribed burn from the docks of the Gunflint Lodge in May.

in Minnesota history (23.86 inches). It's the first time on record that some Minnesota counties are eligible for federal drought aid while others are in line for flood relief, a scenario of extremes predicted in global warming studies, notes climatologist Mark Seeley.

**September**  
Sept. 5 brings record highs to the far north, including a record 90 at International Falls, followed two days later by pounding rains in the parched Arrowhead: Tower records an all-time 24-hour record of 8.7 inches. Central Minnesota, awaiting its turn at the fountain, finally gets 3 to 5 inches of rain Sept. 20-21. That storm hits the Twin Cities hard; a 13-year-old boy drowns in Battle Creek in St. Paul, and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport shuts down for 30 minutes. It also brings to Woodbury the state's 18th and final tornado of the year; that's the fewest tornadoes in a year since 1990.

**October**  
Leaf-peeping requires umbrellas: Several Arrowhead spots notch their wettest Octobers ever and the state as a whole has its third-wettest. The Twin Cities has its wettest August-through-October ever: 18.99 inches. But it's good for gardeners, as the first frost doesn't visit until Oct. 28, more than three weeks behind normal.

**November**  
The Twin Cities have their fourth-driest November on record, and the .01 inches of precipitation in St. Cloud isn't enough to baste a drumstick.

**December**  
It's a month of short- and perhaps long-term turnaround. Heavy snow across the state on Dec. 1, the first day of meteorological winter, is a departure after the dry November. It also signals the onset of snowy and chilly December. The Twin Cities get 8 inches by Dec. 4 and Duluth 15.3

### TWIN CITIES MONTHLY DATA FOR 2007

	High temp.	Low temp.	Avg. temp.	Diff. from avg.	Precip. (inches)	Diff. from avg.	Snow* (inches)	Diff. from avg.
Jan.	41	-6	19.6	6.5	0.31	-0.73	5.5	-8.0
Feb.	47	-17	13.5	-6.6	1.37	0.58	12.6	4.4
Mar.	81	4	38.4	6.3	3.64	1.78	11.0	0.6
April	85	15	47.2	0.6	1.11	-1.20	1.9	-1.2
May	92	41	64.1	4.8	1.99	-1.25	0	-0.1
June	93	51	72.7	4.3	2.05	-2.29	0	0
July	98	56	76.0	2.8	3.29	-0.75	0	0
Aug.	94	54	72.1	1.5	9.32	5.27	0	0
Sept.	92	36	64.8	3.8	6.04	3.35	0	0
Oct.	87	31	54.3	5.6	3.63	1.52	0	-0.6
Nov.	63	4	34.5	2.0	0.09	-1.85	0.4	-9.6
Dec.	36	-4	16.6	-2.1	1.48	0.48	18.1	8.1
2007	98	-17	48.0	2.7	34.32	4.91	49.5	-6.4

\*Snow, ice pellets, hail

inches. The Twin Cities also see the most snow on Christmas Day since 1950 and Duluth ends the year with 19 inches of snow on the ground, delighting winter recreation fans state-

wide with the promise of a new year like the old ones.

Bill McAuliffe • 612-673-7646

