



**Spring:** The Twins played their first outdoor home game since 1981 under blue skies.



**Summer:** Lake Superior reached a record high average surface temperature on Aug. 12.



**Fall:** Leaves at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minn., marked the start of autumn.



**Winter:** Our first snow, wet and heavy, covered much of southern Minnesota in early November.

JANUARY

The year opened with much of the state crusted with ice from a Christmas storm. A blizzard across southwestern Minnesota Jan. 6-7 closed numerous highways, including Interstate 90 from Albert Lea to the South Dakota border. On Jan. 8, Fairmont had 31 inches of snow on the ground, the deepest cover in more than 30 years. St. Cloud received a half-inch of rain on Jan. 23, a record for the date. The next day, 19 inches of snow fell near Grand Marais, and a blizzard Jan. 25 closed I-90 again.

FEBRUARY

Three days of snow led to the first single-side parking limit in Minneapolis in nine winters. (But see December, below.) The month ended with more than 24 inches of snow on the ground at Windom and Fargo-Moorhead. For meteorological winter (December, January and February), each month's temperature in the Twin Cities was below average for the first time since 1981-82.

MARCH

The Twin Cities hit 40 degrees (42, actually) on March 2 for the first time in 91 days, on its way to the fourth-warmest March on record and the first snowless one since 1878. A quick melt but little rain allowed communities along the Red, Minnesota and Mississippi rivers to hold off the predicted high water with little inconvenience. St. Paul closed roads near downtown for the first time in nine years and the Stillwater Lift Bridge was closed for several days. International Falls had its warmest March on record.

APRIL

Blue Earth hit 85 degrees April 1, and lakes from Iowa to Canada shed their winter ice weeks ahead of schedule, many earlier than ever recorded. There was no measurable snow anywhere in Minnesota in the month, another historic first, and well-timed, since the Minnesota Twins started playing outdoors at home for the first time in 29 years on April 12 (beating Boston 5-2). Though an extremely rainy summer was to follow, weather affected the schedule only twice, with a rainout May 7 and the postponed finish of a May 25 tie game. "A charmed season," said spokesman Kevin Smith.

MAY

Heat, humidity and high winds swiped the state May 23-25. The Twin Cities had a record high of 95 on May 24 and a record high overnight temperature of 73 on May 23, with dew points in the sweltering 60s. It was the warmest March, April and May on record in Duluth, second warmest in the Twin Cities.

JUNE

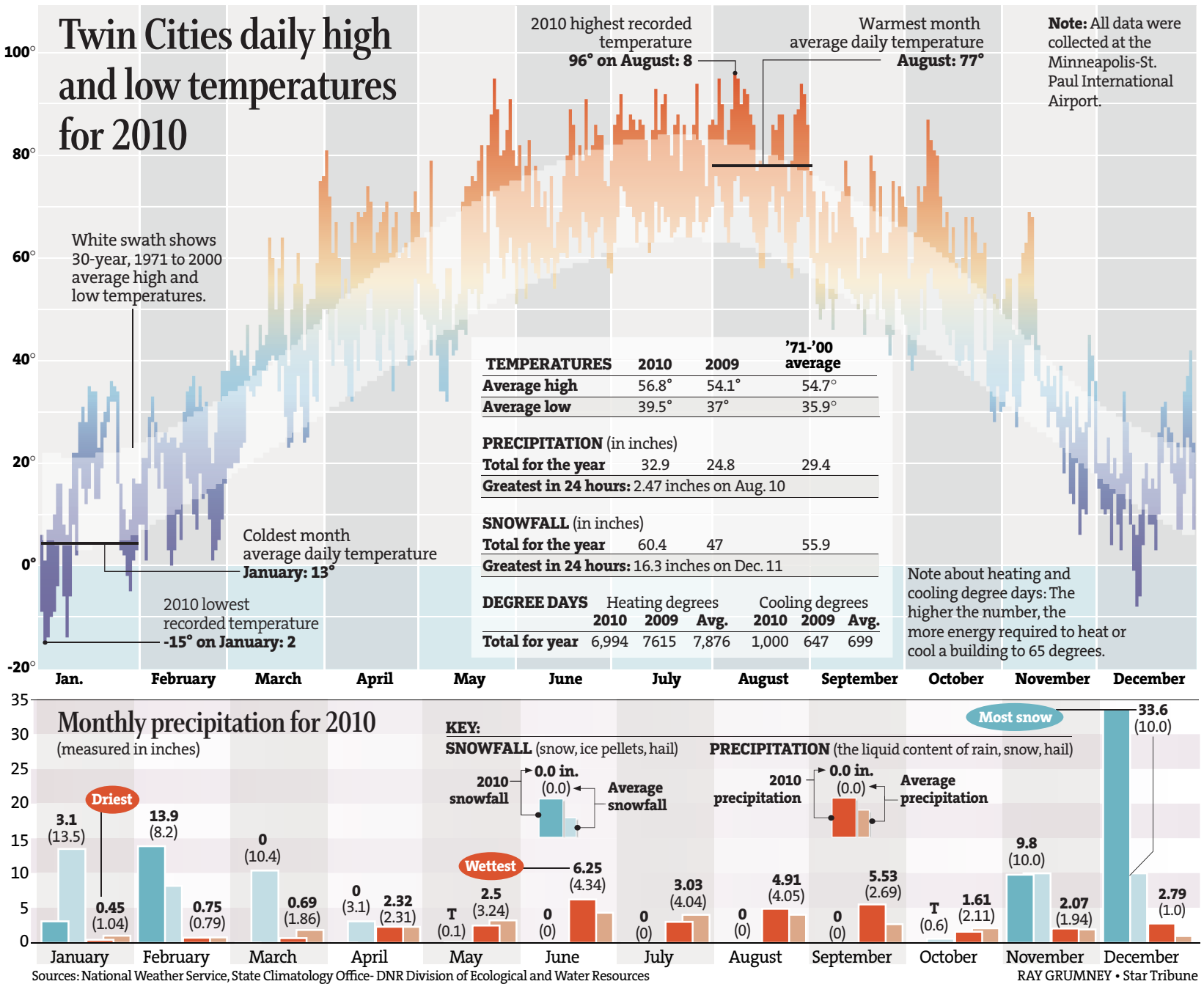
Three rare EF4 tornadoes — each stronger than any in the state in 10 years — were among a record 48 twisters that pounded Minnesota on June 17, most ever in a single day. Three people died, making it the deadliest tornado day in more than 30 years. One EF4 damaged or destroyed more than 200 homes and businesses in Wadena. Minnesota was hit by a record 104 tornadoes in 2010, second most in the nation, in preliminary numbers. Lanesboro reported a record June rainfall with 11.63 inches. Rochester had rain on 20 days, another record.

JULY

Rains moved north. Kabetogama, near Voyageurs National Park, got 9.98 inches of rain in July, and International Falls had its second-wettest July ever with 8.81 inches. St. James saw a dew point of 84 and a heat index of 118 on July 14. Duluth had a high of 70 or higher every day in July, but it never saw 90. That streak continued into ...

AUGUST

... ending Aug. 15 at 46 days. That tied an 1877 streak for the longest on record. An EF4 tornado, fourth to hit the state, destroyed an entire farmstead in Wilkin County on Aug. 7. The Twin Cities high of 96 on Aug. 8 made for the hottest day of the year, while the dew point of 76 was a record for that date. Rochester's average dew point for meteorological summer (June, July and August) was the highest on record, 63.1 degrees. Daily low temperatures in the Twin



# 2010 WEATHER IN EXCESS

Text by **BILL MCAULIFFE** | Graphics by **RAYMOND GRUMNEY**

About all that was missing from Minnesota weather in 2010 was a grasshopper plague. Otherwise it was epic in nearly every way, with record tornadoes, record snow, record rains, flash floods and, just for balance, a record warm spring that led to bumper crops.

TWIN CITIES MONTHLY DATA FOR 2010

	High temp.	Low temp.	Avg. temp.	Diff. from normal	Precip. (inches)	Diff. from normal	Snow* (inches)	Diff. from normal
Jan.	36	-15	13	-0.1	0.45	-0.59	3.1	-10.4
Feb.	38	0	19.7	-0.4	0.75	-0.4	13.9	5.7
Mar.	76	19	41	8.9	0.69	-1.17	0	-10.4
April	81	32	54.9	8.3	2.32	0.01	0	-3.1
May	95	32	60.7	1.4	2.5	-0.74	0	-0.1
June	91	52	69.2	0.8	6.25	1.91	0	0
July	94	61	76.3	3.1	3.03	-1.01	0	0
Aug.	96	56	77	6.4	4.91	0.86	0	0
Sept.	80	41	60.2	-0.8	5.53	2.84	0	0
Oct.	87	28	54	5.3	1.61	-0.5	0	-0.6
Nov.	69	6	35.3	2.8	2.07	0.13	9.8	-0.2
Dec.	42	-8	16.4	-2.3	2.79	1.79	33.6	23.6
2010	96	-15	48.2	2.9	32.9	3.49	60.4	4.5

\*Snow, ice pellets



ARIAN SCHUESSLER • Globe Gazette (Mason City, Iowa)

**June 17 tornadoes :** A large funnel cloud touched down west of Albert Lea, Minn. Minnesota had a record number of tornadoes that day and for the year.

Cities for the period were their highest ever, 4.9 degrees above normal. Wabasha, in southeastern Minnesota, wound up with its wettest summer ever and led the state with 24.59 inches of rain. (The Twin Cities, in comparison, received 14.19 inches.) Rain continued to dodge the metro area's White Bear Lake, which shrunk to its lowest level on record Aug. 8. But the downpours elsewhere were a prelude for ...

SEPTEMBER

... which was the wettest statewide in 120 years of record-keeping. The capper was a Sept. 22-23 inundation across southern Minnesota that dropped 10 inches of rain on Amboy and flooded roads and homes virtually from border to border. The worst damage was from flash flooding along the Zumbro River in Zumbro Falls and Hammond, in southeast Minnesota. Twenty-six homes in Zumbro Falls — nearly a quarter of the city's residences — were targets for buyouts as 2011 began, but one of two gas stations reopened in November and one of two bar/restaurants was set to reopen in early January. "We're chugging along," said Mayor Al VanDeWalker. The Minnesota River reached its highest point ever at Henderson on Sept. 27, and Hwy. 169 was closed for nearly three weeks. The Twin Cities had 17 days with highs of 90 or more through the summer, four above normal. But it took a brief evening heat wave just before midnight Sept. 20 to generate the month's only 80-degree reading. In more than a century, there had never been a high of 80 or more at midnight in September.

OCTOBER

A continental-scale "land hurricane" centered over Minnesota brought sustained winds of 35 to 45 miles per hour and gusts above 60 on Oct. 26-27, along with the lowest air pressure reading ever recorded in the state or nation (28.2) in a nontropical storm. It also generated 7.7 inches of snow in Duluth, the fourth-heaviest October snowfall there. The next night brought the first official frost of the season to the Twin Cities.

NOVEMBER

A run of spectacular warm days culminated with record highs in many cities Nov. 8-10, including a 68 in the Twin Cities on Nov. 9. Some southern Minnesota cities broke 70. It was all a cruel setup, though. Three days later, 12 inches of sopping wet snow crashed down on Maple Grove, with 10.9 in Duluth and 7.7 at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, a Twin Cities record for Nov. 13. The blizzard left 200,000 metro-area utility customers without power at some point. A week later, a light Saturday evening rain froze across southern Minnesota, sending hundreds of cars into ditches and one another. Fargo-Moorhead got slammed by 12.6 inches of snow Nov. 22; International Falls measured 29 for the month.

DECEMBER

Snowvaganza! Snowlapalooza! Snow-MG! It was a December that a common vocabulary couldn't describe, bringing Rochester its snowiest month ever (41.3 inches) and a December record to the Twin Cities (33.6), collapsing the Metrodome, draining the annual plowing budgets of both Minneapolis and St. Paul, prompting another single-side parking restriction, bringing Rochester and St. Cloud their wettest Decembers ever, and ending with a blizzard in northwestern Minnesota that closed I-94 for most of three days through the New Year's holiday weekend. The 17.1 inches of snow Dec. 10-11 in the Twin Cities was the heaviest snowfall since the great Halloween Blizzard of 1991, the greatest ever in December, and fifth-greatest overall. Winona got 23 inches in the same storm. Hutchinson received 57.6 inches of snow for the season by Dec. 31 and had 31 inches on the ground at one point, a record. The suddenly homeless Vikings played a "home" game in Detroit and another, their first outdoors in 29 years, at the University of Minnesota, in a light but icy snowfall. The outlook for 2011: spring flooding again, and a heated stadium debate.

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