

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Climate-Watch, September 2000

National Climatic Data Center - (last update Sep 26, 2000)



Review

The Galveston Hurricane of September 1900

The above figure shows some of the aftermath of the famous Galveston Hurricane of September 1900. On September 8, 1900, the greatest natural disaster to ever strike the United States occurred at Galveston, Texas. In the early evening hours of September 8, a hurricane came ashore at Galveston bringing with it a great storm surge that inundated most of Galveston Island and the city of Galveston. As a result, much of the city was destroyed and at least 6,000 people were killed in a few hours' time.

Following is part of the account of Isaac M. Cline, the senior Weather Bureau employee present at Galveston, of the events leading up to the storm, his personal experiences in the storm, and the aftermath. The horror of Galveston is only partly described in this work. He was probably somewhat still in shock when he wrote this report as he lost his wife and virtually all of his possessions when his house collapsed during the storm. In a later biographical work, he referred to the shooting of hundreds of looters by vigilantes in the aftermath of the storm and the cremation of hundreds of unknown storm victims who otherwise would have decomposed where they lay.

This particular report is extracted from the Monthly Weather Review for September, 1900: Here is an excerpt from a "Special Report on the Galveston Hurricane of September 8th, 1900 by Issac M. Cline, Local Forecast Official and Section Director at Galveston" at the time of the disaster: "Sunday, September 9, 1900, revealed one of the most horrible sights that ever a civilized people looked upon. About three thousand homes, nearly half the residence portion of

Galveston, had been completely swept out of existence, and probably more than six thousand persons had passed from life to death during that dreadful night. The correct number of those who perished will probably never be known, for many entire families are missing. Where 20,000 people lived on the 8th not a house remained on the 9th, and who occupied the houses may, in many instances, never be known. On account of the pleasant Gulf breezes many strangers were residing temporarily near the beach, and the number of these that were lost cannot yet be estimated." The complete report by Issac M. Cline is available from [NOAA/NWS Historical Weather Tales](#)

Other reports on the Galveston Hurricane of 1900:

[NOAA/NWS Commemorates the Galveston Hurricane](#)

[NOAA's 20th Century Top Weather, Water and Climate Events](#)

Summer 2000 Precipitation Maps for the US (based on preliminary data):

[June-August total precipitation](#)

[June-August departure from normal](#)

[June-August precipitation percentile](#)

[June-August standardized precipitation index](#)

[June-August percent of average precipitation](#)

Weather Log September 1-10th, 2000

Highlights this month include: In the U.S., according to the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, increased humidity, lower temperatures and scattered showers decreased wildland fire activity and allowed firefighters to make good progress throughout the Northwest, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming as of the end of August. There were also fewer new smaller fires reported throughout the West. Extreme fire conditions persist, however, in Texas, Kansas, Arkansas and Oklahoma, where fire activity remained steady.

A southern plains heatwave began in late August 2000 and ran through early September. Dozens of cities set records, and many cities set or tied all-time maximum and September temperature records during this period. Some of the Texas cities that broke all-time records during this heat wave include: Houston, Galveston, Austin, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Victoria. A [list](#) of these records is available.

Elsewhere around the globe, flooding is causing widespread problems in Southeast Asia, especially in Cambodia, Thailand and parts of Vietnam. The flooding is the worst in decades along the Mekong River in Cambodia. In China, media reports indicate that over 50 people have died in 2 southern Chinese provinces as a result of typhoon Maria. The typhoon hit between the coastal cities of Huizhou and Shanwei on September 1st, 2000. Tropical storm Kaimi and [Typhoon Wukong](#) also brought deadly rains to parts of southeast Asia. This is also the "rainy season" for some of these areas with frequent flooding rains associated with tropical systems.

In Italy, flooding due to a weekend of heavy rains (9th and 10th) left several hamlets isolated and caused massive floods along the country's coastline. The mudslide which hit Le Giare campsite near the seaside town of Soverato turned the area into a sea of mud, overturning cars and trailers and destroying bungalows. Soverato is on the Gulf of Squillace, on the east side of the "Boot" of Italy on the Ionian Sea.

Weather Log September 11-20th, 2000

According to media reports as of the 12th, at least three people were killed by flooding and landslides in the industrial city of Nagoya and surrounding areas in central Japan on Tuesday as Typhoon Saomai triggered the region's heaviest rains in at least a century. Central Japan had received a record 600 millimeters (24 inches) of rain by Tuesday (12th) afternoon. The deluge caused four deaths, flooded roads, triggered mudslides and damaged houses. According to a Japanese Meteorological Agency official, "the storm was expected to dump rain for another two days, so people should remain on alert".

According to media reports, more than 45,000 residents of Ningbo, a port city in southeastern China, and outlying Zhoushan Island evacuated their homes as Typhoon Saomai delivered heavy rains and winds gusting to 160 kilometers (100 miles) per hour. Officials reported that more than 700 houses collapsed in the region, and that 10 fishing boats collided in the heavy winds off Zhoushan Island. This region in China had heavy rains in August due to tropical systems. The outer feeder bands of the storm lashed China. [Typhoon Saomai](#) was moving slowly northeast toward the Korean Peninsula on the 15th. This area of Asia also had torrential flooding rains in August.

The rains and floods continue across southeast Asia. The floods have forced 600,000 people from their homes in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. Rescue workers were distributing drinking water Thursday (14th), and naval boats evacuated people stranded by high water. At least 89 people have died in Cambodia and eight in Vietnam since the floods began in July, officials said. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said the level of the Mekong River, one of three that meet in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, is higher than any time in the past 70 years. See the complete media report for more information. As of September 18th, more than a million people along the swollen Mekong River were under threat on Monday from relentlessly rising flood waters that have ruined crops, destroyed homes and claimed scores of lives. Dams in Thailand were near their bursting point and Cambodia is also suffering from the flooding. An updated media report is available.

[Tropical Storm/Hurricane Gordon](#) brought heavy rains and isolated tornadoes to Florida on Sunday (17th). The storm dumped over 8 inches of rain in Seabring, FL in the central part of the state. The storm weakened steadily on Sunday (17th) then became extratropical on Monday (18th) but brought locally heavy rains across parts of Georgia and the eastern Carolina's into southeast Virginia to start the workweek.

Weather Log September 21-30th, 2000

Tropical Storm [Helene](#) brought some flooding rains to parts of the southeast U.S. on the (21-22nd) but the remnants of the storm moved quickly off the Carolina coast and out to sea.

A snowstorm that had earlier blanketed most of Wyoming trained its fury on Cheyenne over the weekend (23-24th) , setting a record for snow fall so early in the fall, before plowing through Colorado and into western Nebraska. Wyoming's capital recorded 10.5 inches of snow, before starting to melt.

One minute before midnight Saturday (23rd), enough drops had fallen in a rain gauge at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport to register 1/100th of an inch -- the only measurable rainfall the official rain gauge had taken since June 30. Those few drops, and the showers that followed on Sunday, officially ended North Texas' record dry spell. The streak had shattered the previous record of 58 days set during the dust bowl in 1934 and reached again in 1950.

Hurricane Isaac remained deep in the Atlantic Ocean and posed no immediate threat to land as it held onto its top winds of 115 mph Monday (25th) , forecasters said, see the complete news report. See the image of [Issac](#) as a tropical storm on the 22nd in the extreme eastern Atlantic.

Flooding update in Asia: According to media reports, new flooding across India and Bangladesh is believed to have killed more than 700 people in eastern India and Bangladesh. Rescue workers on Monday (25th) used boats and military helicopters to help some of the millions of people washed out of their homes by floods.

Flooding is also continuing in southeast Asia. Early monsoon rains that began in July have wrought havoc along the Mekong river and its tributaries running through Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. More than 4.5 million people have been affected, most severely in the large delta in southeastern Cambodia and southern Vietnam, where the Mekong meanders before feeding into the South China Sea.

For U.S. National Drought information:

[Climate Prediction Center Drought Information](#)

[National Drought Mitigation Center](#)

[30-month standardized precipitation index](#)

[12-month standardized precipitation index](#)

[12-month precipitation percentile](#)

[12-month departure from normal](#)

Other global highlights for the month can be found at [NOAA/OGP Special Global Summary for September 2000](#).

Note: Hazard event satellite images available courtesy of [NOAA OSEI Satellite Images WWW site](#).

Selected U.S. City and State Extremes

The [Selected U.S. City and State Extremes](#) provide a list of new records that were set across the U.S. during September 2000.

Additional Resources

- [NOAA Historical Visible Imagery Library](#)
- [Additional NOAA OSEI Satellite Images](#) (Western Fires, Tropical Storms, etc)
- [NCDC Storm Event Database](#)