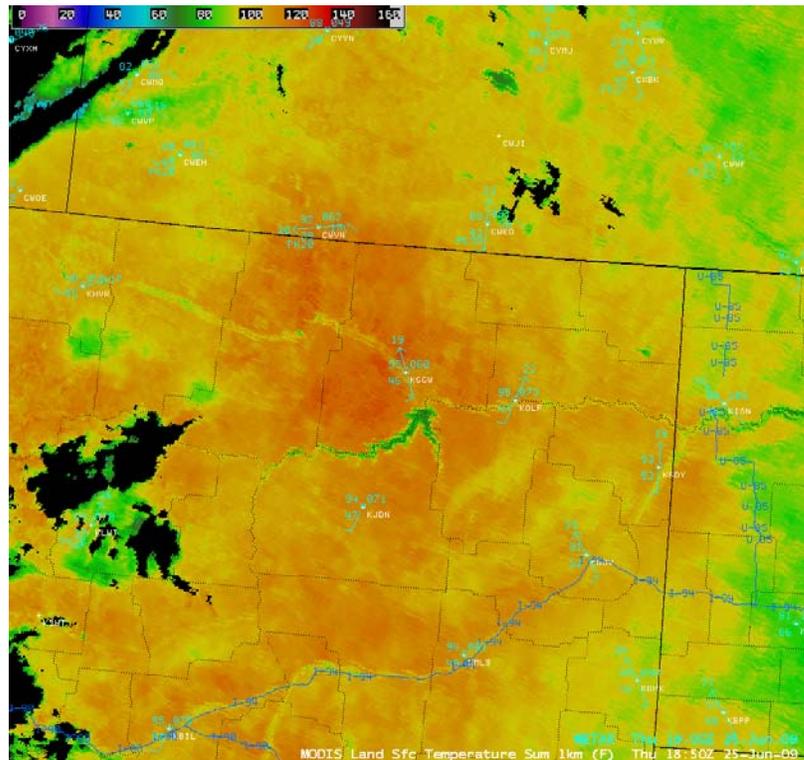




Under the Big Sky e-letter June 26, 2009

Lightning Safety Awareness Week has been this week from June 21-27: Last year the United States had 28 lightning deaths, a substantial reduction from the 100 or so deaths we had in the late 1990s and the early 2000's, a sign that tells me awareness programs works! If you would like educational materials you can use in your workplace for safety, there are some amazing resources at: <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov> We had some thunderstorm roll across the area yesterday evening, with very little precipitation. The lightning from these storms produced several fires, another hazard from lightning.

Record High: Glasgow had a record high of 102 degrees yesterday, breaking the old record of 99 degrees set in our dust bowls years in 1936. Quite a change from the record coldest first ten days of the month! That was our first official over 90 degree day since Sept 20, 2008, and our first over 100 degree day since August 25, 2008. Other triple digit highs around the region included: 100 at Wolf Point and 101 at Nashua and at the Pines. Scott Bachmaier from the University of Wisconsin sent me a link to this satellite imagery showing the huge temperature contrasts from the Milk, Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers as well as Fort Peck Lake (lots of green there showing cooler mid 60s!) compared to the ground surface temperature which was showing well over 120 degrees in SW Valley County.



http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/goes/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/MODIS_LST_20090625_1850_mt.png

Online Weather Stations: Many of you are familiar with our current weather observations page: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/ggw/current.php> There are a lot of different sources providing the information to us, some which we maintain, and some which are maintained by other agencies. Some of the sources include:

NWS owned sites (Glasgow, Wolf Point and Jordan, also cooperative weather observations taken 1/day)

FAA owned sites (Sidney, Glendive)

USDA Agrimet Stations

Land Management Agencies RAWs Stations (BLM, USFWS)

State DOT sites

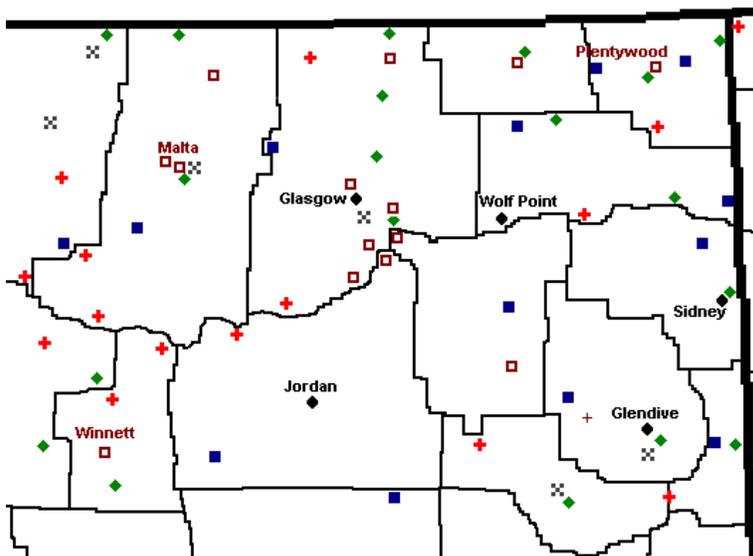
Smaller Airports

Individual home weather stations

We aren't able to post all the individual stations on our website (we can't link to any .com sites) unless they have set up their accounts to share the data through an intermediary service such as the Weather Underground, or the MesoWest site at the University of Utah. Here are weblinks to some other data sources: <http://www.met.utah.edu/cgi-bin/droman/mesomap.cgi?state=MT&rawsflag=3>
<http://www.wunderground.com/weatherstation/ListStations.asp?selectedState=MT&selectedCountry=United+States>

If you have a home weather station that you would like to get online, let us know. We have a few folks who can help you on what the software and hardware requirements are, and get you an account on the Mesowest site to post your data to.

Map showing locations of weather information on the NWS Glasgow Current Conditions page:



Vehicular heat deaths: Golden Gate Weather meteorologist Jan Null has a keen interest in the number of deaths due to people being caught inside vehicles. He's done research on how much a vehicle heats up after being turned off and left to sit in the heat. The following information from his website may be of interest to the health care community, as well as the general public:

<http://ggweather.com/heat/index.htm>

"Already in 2009 there have been fourteen deaths of infants after being left inside a hot vehicle. Last year there were a total of at least forty-two such fatalities in the United States due to hyperthermia after they were left in hot cars, trucks, vans and SUV's. This sadly followed 35 and 42 child deaths in 2007 and 2006 respectively. Since 1998 there have been at least a total of 428 of these needless tragedies. This study shows that these incidents can occur on days with relatively mild (i.e., ~ 70 degrees F) temperatures and that vehicles can occur reach life-threatening temperatures very rapidly. "

Other statistics that he provides include:

Airbags vs. Hyperthermia Deaths

-In the three-year period of 1990-1992, before airbags became popular, there were only 11 known deaths of children from hyperthermia.

*-In the most recent three-year period of 2004-2006, when almost all young children are now placed in back seats instead of front seats, there have been at least 110 known fatalities from hyperthermia...a ten-fold increase from the rate of the early 1990s. **[Important note: This in no way implies that it is advocated that children be placed in the front seat or that airbags be disabled.]***

Circumstances

- *An examination of media reports about the 361 child vehicular hyperthermia deaths for a ten year period (1998 through 2007) shows the following circumstances:*
 - *51% - child "forgotten" by caregiver*
 - *30% - child playing in unattended vehicle*
 - *18% - child intentionally left in vehicle by adult*
 - *1% - circumstances unknown*

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

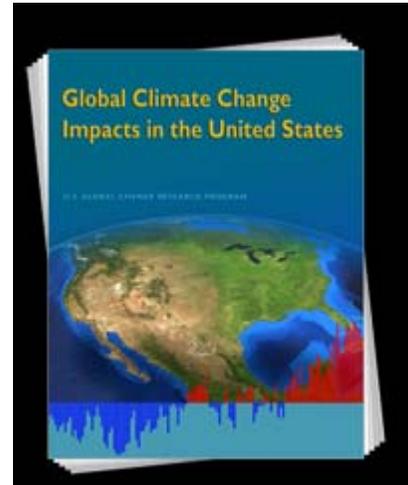
- *NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE. NOT EVEN FOR A MINUTE !*
- *Be sure that all occupants leave the vehicle when unloading. Don't overlook sleeping babies.*
- *Always lock your car and ensure children do not have access to keys or remote entry devices. If a child is missing, check the car first, including the trunk. Teach your children that vehicles are never to be used as a play area.*
- *Keep a stuffed animal in the carseat and when the child is put in the seat place the animal in the front with the driver.*
- *Or place your purse or briefcase in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the car.*
- *Make "look before you leave" a routine whenever you get out of the car.*
- *Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up for school.*

Latest Climate Report: A 190 page report entitled, "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States" was recently released, and was covered by many of the news networks. I realize that climate change is a very sticky topic with some, but I do suggest that it's worth taking a look at page 123, the section on the Great Plains. The report also discusses both natural and human influences to climate change. They give two scenarios by the end of this century, one with lower green house emissions, and one with higher green house emissions, and both show that our area will be warmer, and wetter. If you'd like more information, please go to:

<http://www.globalchange.gov/publications/reports/scientific-assessments/us-impacts>

NOAA Press Release about the report:

http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090616_climate_report.html

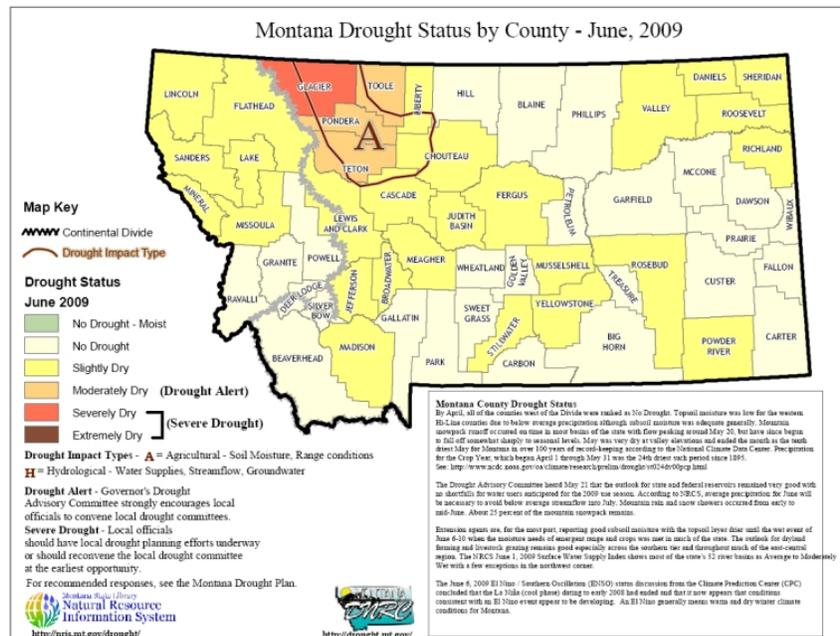


Storm Prediction Center Severe Weather Climatology: SPC has put together a website showing the severe weather climatology of our area based on WFO Glasgow radar area:

<http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/online/rda/GGW.html>

One thing to keep in mind is that the reporting prior to 1995 was not as good as it is now, so some of the data that went into this may not include all the actual reports of severe weather that occurred because that information may not have been collected and data based.

Drought updates: So far, it's the third driest May-June on record, and the 4th driest June for Glasgow. The most recent Drought Monitor has much of our area in the abnormally dry range, and the state of Montana Drought Advisory Committee also has some of our area in the slightly dry category.



<http://nris.state.mt.us/drought/status/status2009.asp>

The National Drought Mitigation Center has released its summer newsletter. You can catch up on their activities at: <http://drought.unl.edu/documents/news/droughtscape/droughtscapesummer2009all.pdf>

Humor for the Week: John Pulasky has shared with me many of the “Earl...” cartoons done by Wally Badgett who is from the Miles City area. They truly do fit our climate up here, and this one came to mind while I was sitting at a baseball game last weekend. We went from shorts and t-shirts (with lots of sun screen and bug spray) to jackets and blankets in less than an hour, with the sun umbrella’s being blown away.

