

## Early storms signal wet May across state

By Phaedra Haywood, The New Mexican

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Tuesday's (May 5) scattered rain showers didn't break any records in the Santa Fe area but did bring significantly more moisture than usually arrives at this time of year, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Jason Frazier.

Santa Fe averages about 0.94 inch of rainfall during the month of May. About an inch of rain fell in the Lamy area Tuesday, while Tesuque got about a quarter of an inch, Frazier said.

Overall, "it's a very good sign" that rainfall for the month of May will be greater than in recent years, he said. The last time the area received more than an inch of rain in May was in 2008, Frazier said.

Frazier said the next couple of days will bring more scattered afternoon thunderstorms to the area, but conditions should dry out by Thursday or Friday. Saturday could potentially bring a little more moisture.

The storm system that is making its way out of the state had more dramatic effects in other parts of New Mexico.

Frazier said the Weather Service measured about three-quarters of an inch of rain near the Albuquerque International Sunport on Monday, May 4, the most rain on that date since 1897.

Curry County got about 5.4 inches of rain between Monday and Tuesday — 31 percent of the average rainfall for the year in that part of the state — which resulted in flooding in the area and the issuance of a flashflood watch on Tuesday.

Frazier said that area near the Texas border was expected to get another quarter-inch or so over the next 24 hours, which could have a bigger-than-normal impact because of what has already fallen.

Several funnel clouds were reported in the Roswell area Tuesday, Frazier said, and one of them touched down briefly about five miles southwest of the city, damaging a shed and wrapping a garage door around the top of a power pole.

This atypically wet stretch of early May could signal that we are entering more of an "El Ni-o phase," Frazier said, a pattern that usually means an uptick in moisture across the state.

For gardening enthusiasts: We are nearing the date of last spring's final freeze date — May 10. But Frazier said, "That doesn't mean we can't still have a late-season thing," so if you do decide to put plants out early, be prepared to cover them up or bring them inside if temperatures drop.

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