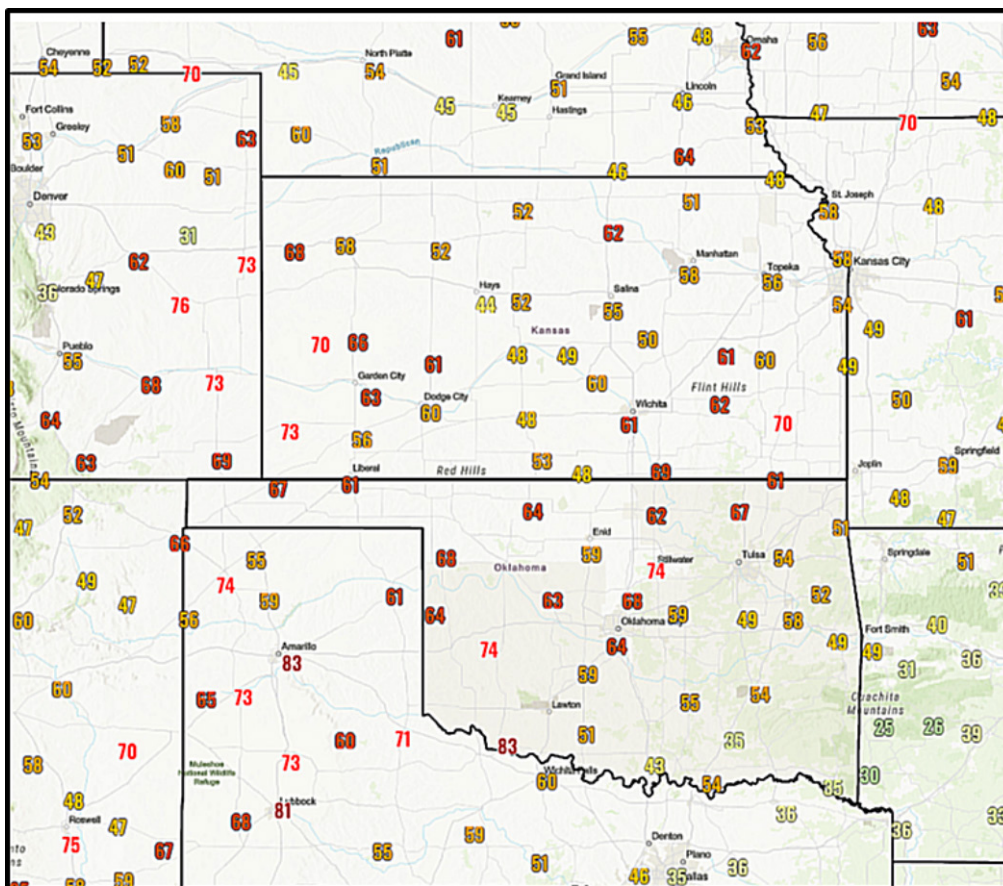


Harsh Central U.S. Weather Reduces Wheat Recovery Potential

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, March 16 (World Weather Inc.) – *The central U.S. windstorm lived up to every bit of its potential Friday into Saturday. Two more bouts of excessive wind are likely in the central and southern Plains in this next week and both will come with additional very low humidity, blowing dust and some additional wild temperature swings. All of this describes a classic drought pattern and concern is steadily rising that the Great Plains may be facing a serious dryness issue if changes do not occur soon.* Winter wheat is losing potential to recover from the damage incurred by bitter cold temperatures in January with little to no snow on the ground. This raises the potential that production could be down significantly if late March and April do not provide wetter and milder weather.

Characteristics of a serious drought include; widely swinging temperatures, very low humidity, dry soil, little to no precipitation and strong wind speeds. All of these characteristics have been seen in recent weeks across the central and southwestern United States, northern Mexico and to a lesser degree in Canada's Prairies and the western Corn and Soybean Belt.

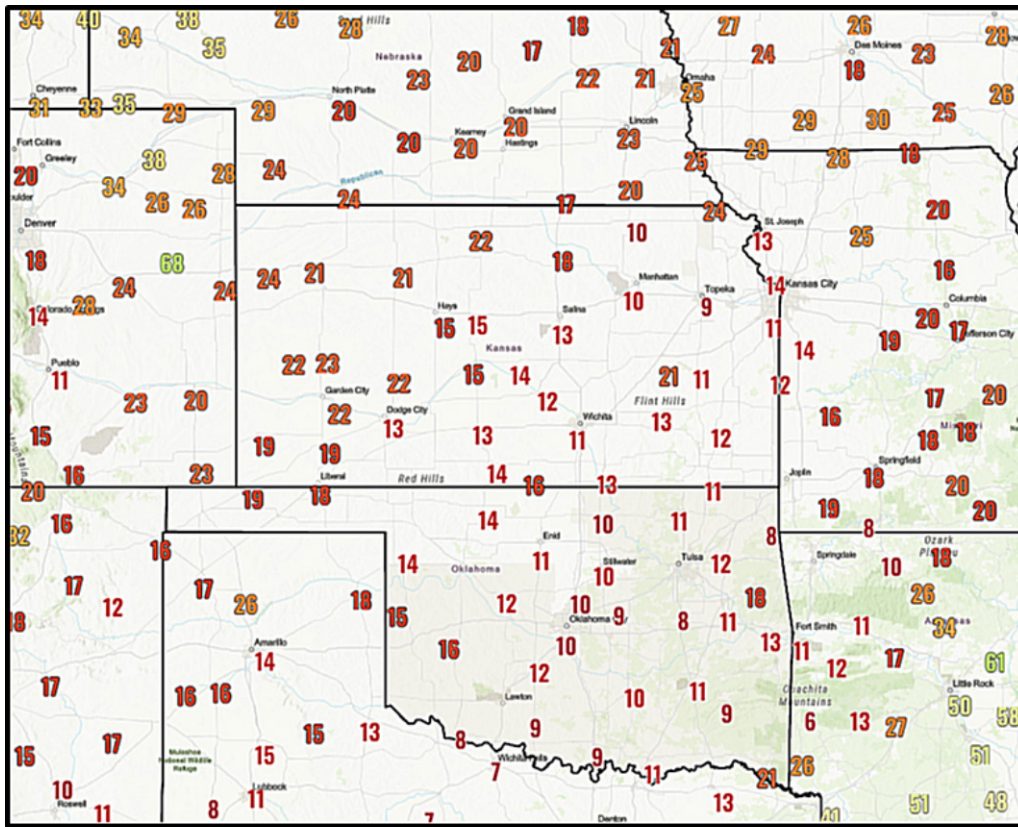


Peak Wind Gusts On Friday, March 14, 2025 In MPH

Some extremely cold weather occurred in the central and eastern United States during January and February this year and some of the cold that occurred impacted wheat

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areas with little or no snow on the ground. Some agricultural meteorologists suggested earlier this year that substantial damage had occurred in hard red winter wheat areas. World Weather, Inc. contended that as long as the wheat plant did not die it would have potential to recover if a moist and mild spring evolved. Moist and mild to cool spring weather is perfect for wheat plants to set new tillers and repair root systems for a surprisingly great recovery from damage that was perceived during the bitter cold and snow free events like that of this year. Now that it is becoming more obvious that a cool and wet spring may not be evolving concern is rising that crops may not be treated to the right kind of conditions to recover from previous damage. In addition to that, drought conditions including; low relative humidity, strong wind speeds and wildly swinging temperatures can actually add to the damage that might have occurred previously.



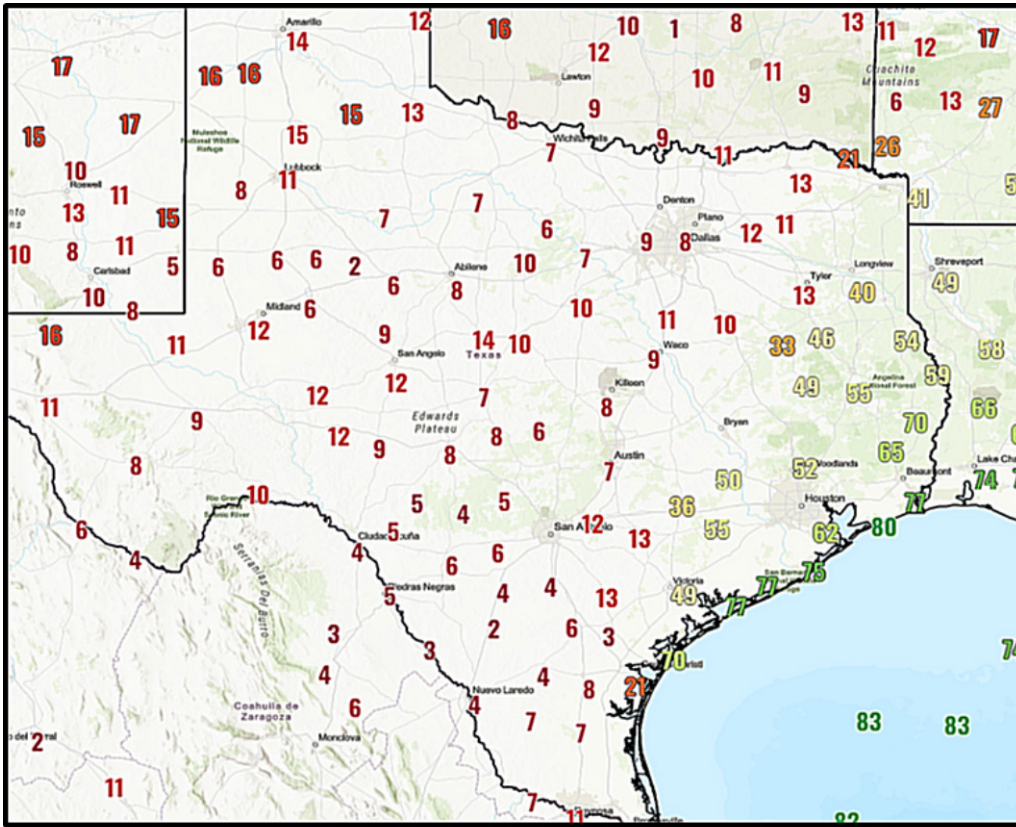
Lowest Relative Humidity On Friday, March 14, 2025 In MPH

There have already been a few bouts of strong wind, low relative humidity and quickly changing temperatures this year. Some of those conditions were reaching an extreme Thursday into Saturday. First low humidity, abundant sunshine and warm southerly breezes Thursday brought 80-degree Fahrenheit highs to the central Plains and parts of the Midwest with the Midwest seeing more of that Friday. Southern Texas reported highs Saturday in the 90s to 104 degrees Fahrenheit and that was not the first bout of such extreme heat this year.

Friday's weather became most intense with wind speeds of 60-83 mph occurring from eastern Colorado and western Kansas to West Texas and expanding to the east through central Oklahoma and southern Kansas. Relative humidity during the height of the windstorm and warm temperatures dropped to the range 8-24% across most of hard

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red winter wheat country. The humidity dropped further in Texas with most of the state reporting humidity of 2-14%. That is much too low with strong wind speeds. The only “normal-ish” relative humidity on Friday was in eastern Texas where humidity was 46-77% with coastal areas most humid.



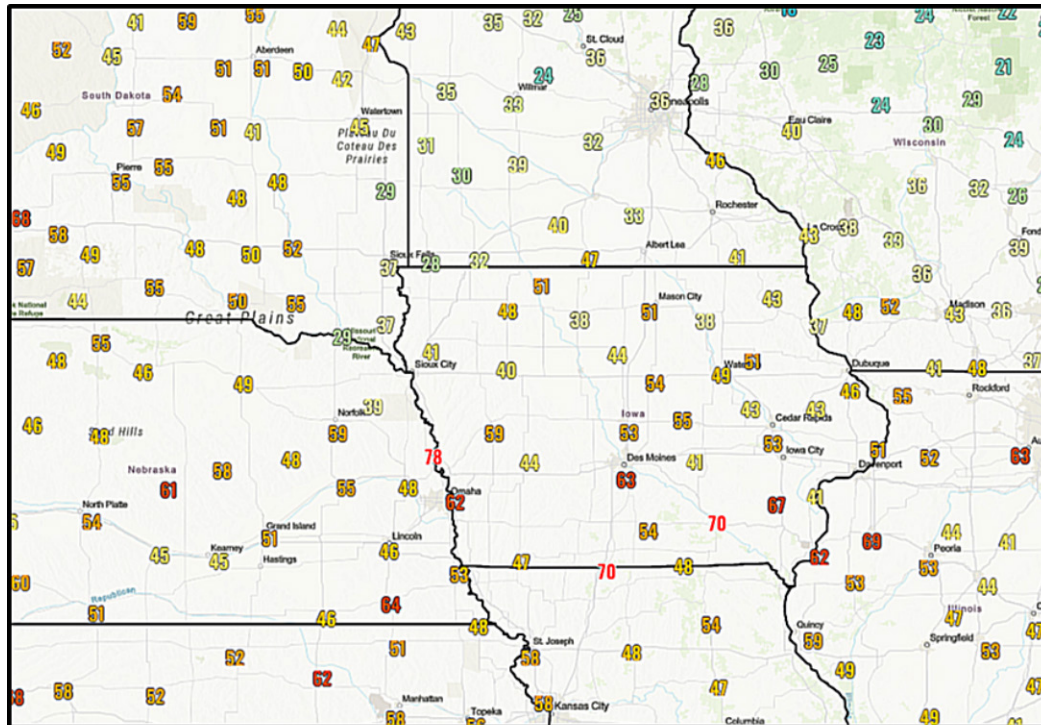
Lowest Relative Humidity On Friday, March 14, 2025 In MPH

Dust that was picked up from the dry areas in New Mexico and West Texas was carried deeply into the Midwest. Low visibilities were reported from the central and southern Plains to the Midwest and reports of dust accumulating on cars and structures were commonplace. Some of the light rain that fell as cooler air arrived was very dirty because of the dust in the air leaving mud spots on car windows and windward sides of buildings and other structures.

The wind eased up Saturday in the Plains while continuing in the Midwest and eastern states. Some slight improvement in relative humidity occurred, but it will not last long. A new surge of heat is expected to build back into the Great Plains Monday and Tuesday returning afternoon temperatures to the 70s and 80s in most of hard red winter wheat country and a part of the western Corn and Soybean Belt. Another bout of strong wind speeds is also expected Tuesday into Wednesday. Wind speeds of 55 to 75 mph will occur and another bout of blowing dust should be expected followed by another plunge in temperatures returning Wednesday morning with freezes occurring similar to those reported in much of the production region this (Sunday) morning. If it was not for much-improved land management practices the blowing dust situation across the Plains might be as bad as it was in the 1930s.

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The temperature swings from Friday to Sunday were nearly 60 degrees Fahrenheit in some areas of the central and southern Plains and the same will occur from Tuesday into Thursday of this week. These temperature changes are much more extreme than usual and that is because of the low relative humidity. One more round of warming, low humidity, strong wind speeds and falling temperatures will occur Thursday into Friday, although the afternoon temperatures will not get as warm this time around and the late week wind speeds may not be quite as strong as those of early this week.



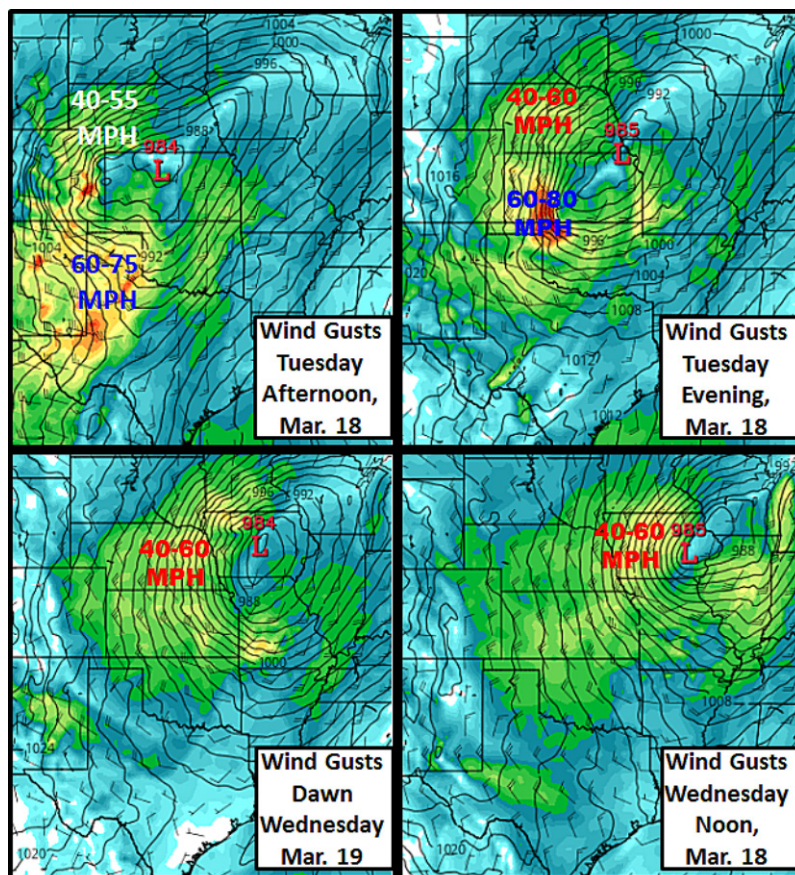
Peak Wind Gusts On Friday, March 14, 2025 In MPH

Damaged wheat has no opportunity to improve in this environment. The wild change in temperatures is stressful – not only for damaged crops, but for livestock in the region as well. The strong wind and low humidity pull more and more moisture out of the ground diminishing the potential for wheat to develop. **The environment will prevent new tillers from being set and damaged root systems will not get repaired. Some wheat fields may experience more damage because of the drying wind and heaving soil resulting from the quick rise and fall in temperatures.**

It is not too late for a weather change to come along and greatly improve the environment for wheat and other crops and livestock in the central and southern Plains and/or the western Corn and Soybean Belt; however, changes had better start soon or it will quickly become too late.

World Weather, Inc. is not expecting enough change in the upper level wind flow pattern (jet stream) in the next few weeks and without a change in that there cannot be much change in the general weather pattern. That means continued below normal precipitation, windy conditions (at times), low relative humidity and wild temperature swings will continue leaving all of agriculture in the central and southern and a part of the far western Corn Belt stressed.

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Planting of sorghum, corn and cotton is already under way in South Texas and the Texas Coastal Bend and Canola is trying to develop in Oklahoma along with winter wheat. These crops could be faced with some serious moisture issues in unirrigated areas. There is also likely to be planting delays in unirrigated areas from Texas into Oklahoma in the next few weeks and possibly in Kansas next month. Dryness is still prevalent farther to the north and east into the northern Plains and western Midwest, but it is not quite as serious as that in the central and southern Plains.

High pressure building usually begins

aloft in the central United States during May. **The dryness in the Plains today and lack of potential change through early April is raising the potential for a stronger ridge to develop sooner than usual. If that occurs there will be some concern over western Corn Belt planting later this spring.**

Despite all of the doom and gloom, there is some potential for a few bouts of needed moisture in the northern Plains and western Corn Belt this spring. Producers will take full advantage of that moisture when it occurs and plant as early as possible which is probably a very good thing – as long as these wild temperature swings do not bring late season frost and freezes to the region after planting and emergence occurs. The situation must be closely monitored.

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