

Low Rainfall Marks '63 Weather Story

The lowest rainfall in nearly a third of a century dominated the 1963 weather story as recorded by the 83-year old Dale Enterprise weather station. The 21.33 inches of rain was the least since 18.75 inches in the previous severe drought year of 1930.

Snow has been dominating the weather story in the three previous years as the result of a record and near-record falls. The 33 inches which fell in 1963 had to take last place in the past four years and was little more than half of the record 64 inches in 1962.

2 Months Above Normal

There had to be two months with above normal rainfall in the past year or the 1963 record might have tumbled under that of 1930. Heavy precipitation in March and November provided the 2.58 inches to place the '63 total above '30.

Only one Dale Enterprise station record was set during the past year, the .03 inch for October being the lowest for that month and second only to December 1896 which had no rain. (Madison College and other stations in Rockingham county reported no rain in October with one dry period extending for 32 days).

Other stations in the county recorded some more rain than Dale Enterprise but the West Rockingham figures are the official ones used by the U. S. Weather Bureau. One county

station, Naked Creek, north of Elkton, measured less rain than Dale Enterprise: 21 inches.

Driest Since 1941

The previous driest year at Dale Enterprise was 1941 when the rainfall was only 23.45 inches. Normal rainfall over the more than four score years at the West Rockingham station is 36.22 inches. But the average for the ten preceding years—1962-53 was only 34.74 inches. The average for the past 20 years is 35.57.

In 1962, the rainfall was 29.77 inches, this being only one of nine of 83 years with less than 30 inches of rain.

Last year, melted snow ac-

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September Rains

September: 2.64, least since 1.58 min 1950; normal 3.14; 6 days of rain, most .90 on 5th and 1.46 on 29th were the heaviest since March.

October: .03, a record; previous low was .12 in 1945; normal 2.63; shower on 28th was only rain in 32 days.

November: 3.76, most since 4.67 in 1952; normal 2.10; rain on 7 days; 1.59 on 29th and .93 on 6th.

December: 1.20, lowest since .67 in 1960; normal 2.23; rain on 4 days; 9½ inches snow on 23rd. produced .60 precipitation.

Rainfall in the previous ten years at Dale Enterprise ranged from 29.77 in 1962 to 38.61 in 1955.

Snowfall in recent years: 1963—33; 1962—64; 1961—47; 1960—51.25; 1959—10.50; 1958—39; 1957—21.25. For the four years, 1956-53, a total of only 43.75 inches fell with 17.50 in 1954 being the biggest snow year.

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counted for 1.90 inches. The snowfall of 33 inches is about double the normal fall at Dale Enterprise, but the total ranked third in the past three years. The 1962 fall of 64 inches set a Dale Enterprise record. 1960 with 51¼ inches and 1961 with

1963, 1930 Rain

Here is a month-by-month record of rain during the two driest years on the 83-year records of the Dale Enterprise Weather station:

	1963	1930
January	.82	2.65
February	.82	11.1
March	5.32	2.62
April	1.01	1.19
May	.90	1.26
June	1.36	3.93
July	1.29	.08
August	1.65	1.11
September	2.64	.91
October	.03	.21
November	3.76	.84
December	1.20	2.84
Totals	21.33	18.75

47 inches hold places among the ten big snow years at the weather station. Average snowfall of the the past five years, including 1963, was 43 inches. More snow fell in the past five years than during the preceding ten years.

There was little indication

that 1963 would be a drier year when 5.32 inches of rain fell in March, the most for the month since the flood year of 1936. But only 8.85 inches fell in April through September, a period when precipitation was most needed for vegetable water supplies. Only in September did as much as one inch of rain fall in a 24-hour period. Downpours accompanying thunder storms were missing during the summer.

Monthly Summary

Here is a month-by-month summary of 1963 rainfall: January: .82 inch, least since 1955; normal 2.16; rain on 6 days, most for day .36 inches. Snow: 2.25 inches.

February: 1.35 inches, 1.84 normal; least since 1959; rain 2 days; snow on 10 days. inches.

March: 5.32 inches, since 6.06 in 1936; normal 2.62; 10 days of rain, 1.52 inch on 12th and 1.51 on 19th; snow on 1 day. inches.

April: 1.01, least since 1942; normal 1.67; rain on 6 days, most .37 on 17th.

May: .90, least since 1941; normal 3.99; 7 days of rain; most .55 on 17th. flurries on May 1 first since 1908.

June: 1.36, least since 1950; normal 3.79; 9 days of rain, most .40 on 3rd.

July: 1.29, least since 1908 in 1930; normal 4.57; rain on 8 days; most .41 on 17th.

August: 1.65, least since 1950; normal 4.31; rain on 9 days; most .75 on 17th.

September: 2.64, least since 1950; normal 3.14; rain on 6 days; most .90 on 5th and 1.46 on 29th were the heaviest since March.

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