

# A brief history of FLOODING in Southern Nevada

**Jan. 7, 1910. Population, 3,321:** Storms flood Meadow Valley Wash, 100 miles north of Las Vegas, damaging 100 miles of the Salt Lake Railroad that had cost about \$1 million to build.

**July 23, 1923. Population, 5,000:** A downpour drops 1.98 inches of rain during the afternoon, causing up to \$10,000 damage in Las Vegas.

**Aug. 4, 1929. Population, 8,500:** Thunderstorms create a river that races down Mount Charleston, burying the highway to Las Vegas under 3 feet of water. Damage estimated at \$50,000.

**June 10, 1932. Population, 9,500:** A storm drenches Boulder City, causing thousands of dollars in damage after submerging a 100-foot-wide swath of El Dorado Valley under 5 feet of water. A couple dies when their car overturns because of the rushing water.

**Aug. 11, 1941. Population, 17,000:** Two railroad bridges and a highway bridge are destroyed by floodwaters racing down the California Wash, 45 miles north of Las Vegas. Overton sustains severe damage after some of the largest flows of the century swell the Muddy River. A Moapa Valley cowboy and a highway maintenance foreman rescue a Minnesota woman and her son when their car is swept down the California Wash, where water stood 8 feet deep and 300 feet wide for seven hours.

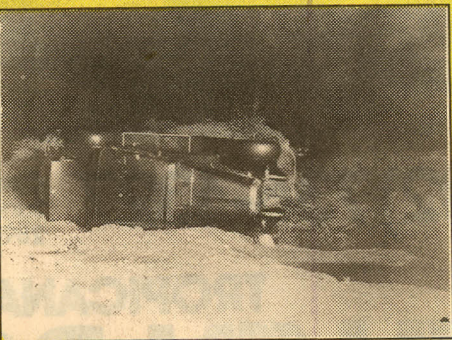
**July 31, 1949. Population, 48,000:** A rainstorm with violent winds in Las Vegas causes traffic accidents that injure three. Tens of thousands of dollars in damage is reported, mostly in Virgin Valley where a tornado destroys hay crops. Airplanes at the Las Vegas Air Force Base sustain wind damage, and two radio stations go off the air because of power failures.

**June 13, 1955. Population: 82,900:** Hundreds of homes and stores are damaged in Las Vegas. Four feet of water submerges parts of the Twin Lakes subdivision. The municipal golf course and the Brentwood Park tract sustain heavy damage, and a woman who fell into a ditch nearly drowns. Downed phone lines affect 75 percent of the city. Also, 100 yards of retaining wall washes away, damaging 20 houses along Beechwood Place, Arrow Place and Purple Sage Avenue. Property damage is estimated at \$3 million.

**Aug. 21, 1957. Population, 101,800:** The National Weather Service reports the highest rainfall on record for a 24-hour period in Las Vegas after McCarran Air Field measures 2.59 inches of rain. Isolated Vegas Heights and portions of highways and roads are destroyed. Damage is set at \$50,000.

**June 19, 1967. Population, 218,928:** An 11-year-old boy drowns and thousands of shoppers and motorists are stranded in Las Vegas. Caesars Palace employees are ordered to move their cars when a drainage ditch overflows near the casino.

**Sept. 14, 1974. Population, 336,900:** Twelve feet of water smashes through Eldorado Canyon, 50 miles southeast of Las Vegas, killing nine at Nelson's Landing. Everything in the flood's path is swept into Lake Mohave, including a marina, restaurant, gasoline dock, boats, 50 cars and 20 mobile homes.



**July 3, 1975. Population, 351,500:** Two people die after being swept into flood currents in North Las Vegas. Between 300 and 500 cars at Caesars Palace are damaged by floodwaters channeled through the casino's parking lot. Damage is estimated at \$4.5 million.

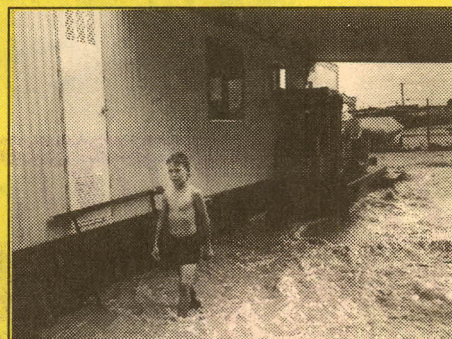
**Aug. 10, 1981. Population, 494,460:** In Moapa Valley, 80 miles north of Las Vegas, two storms 14 miles apart drop 6.5 inches and 5 inches of rain, respectively. Eighty-five percent of the rainfall occurred in 15 minutes, resulting in flows of 20,000 cubic feet per second through the Valley of Fire Wash. Rains of such intensity are believed to happen once every 200 to 500 years. Damage in Moapa Valley estimated at \$10 million.

**Aug. 10, 1983. Population, 531,210:** Four inches of rain falls over the Flamingo Wash watershed, in the southwest part of the valley. Several days after the flash flood, a child dies when soils that had been carried by the flood collapses. Damage estimated at \$3 million.

**July through September 1984. Population, 546,580:** Storms cause massive property damage, prompting President Reagan to declare Clark County a disaster area. Seven people die in two incidents where floodwaters fill Flamingo Wash, Las Vegas Wash and Blue Diamond Wash, a tributary of Duck Creek. Later, a child dies when a dry wash caves in. Damage to public facilities is estimated at \$9 million.

**June 10, 1990. Population, 741,459:** A 25-year-old woman drowns when her car is caught in a flooded street, and a 19-year-old man drowns in Green Valley where he was swept into a manhole during a storm that drops 1.57 inches of rain in an hour.

**July 16, 1990. Population, 741,459:** A 25-year-old woman drowns after her car is swept off Arville Street and into Flamingo Wash. Police say she appears to have jumped out of her car, because her body was found downstream in the lower level of the Imperial Palace parking garage. The June 10 and July 16 storms cause \$8.7 million in damage to public facilities.



## REVIEW JOURNAL

June 10, 1932 photo used courtesy of Ray Cutright Collection, UNLV Library.

June 13, 1955 photo used courtesy of Single Item Accessions Collection, UNLV Library.