



Top 10 Rainiest US Cities and the *One Billion* Dollar Question

San Francisco (WeatherBill.com) – Take a deep breath. Knees shaking, you stand before a live studio audience. The house lights are down low; the dozens of faces are obscured. That doesn't really matter because the spotlight beaming down on you has limited visibility to the tip of your nose. A hush falls over the anxious crowd as the reality game show host to your left asks the final question: "For *one billion* dollars [pregnant pause], what's the rainiest city in the United States?" The clock's ticking. The spotlight's getting hotter. What's your guess?

Chances are you just lost *one billion* dollars. Seattle? Wrong. Portland? Not even close. The rainiest city in the United States is Mobile. Seattle's ranking? Number 41. Portland? 42.

In a study on the top 10 rainiest cities in the United States released by San Francisco-based WeatherBill, Inc., Mobile averages more than five feet of rainfall annually. Portland gets about three feet. Cities in the Southeast dominate the list until the Northwest makes its debut at number 24 with Olympia. The capital city of The Evergreen State maintains its rainy day reputation by being the city with the most rainy days annually (63 days) but the Northwest's rainy day pride doesn't last long: Mobile comes in second on the most rainy days list with 59 days.

To create the lists, WeatherBill studied more than three decades of rainfall data from 200 National Weather Service stations in major US cities, as defined by the US Census Bureau. The second quarter is the rainiest with 10 cities averaging more than 15 inches of rain. Mobile has the most rain of any city until the fourth quarter when Olympia showers start to pick up the pace making it the rainiest city.

Like most of the Southeastern cities on the list, Mobile's subtropical weather is heavily influenced by the Gulf of Mexico. The gulf's warm water temperature feeds powerful Atlantic storms especially between the months of June and November that bring on the rain. Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana are the wettest states while the Mountain and Pacific regions have the driest states. For *one billion* dollars, you probably can guess the driest city correctly: Las Vegas has the lowest total annual rainfall and the least number of rainy days.

The rainiest city data also unveiled weather trends. As the climate changes, rain is increasing in the East and Southeast while decreasing in the West. 23 cities are getting more rain than ever before while 49 cities are getting less rain. 15 cities have weather that's becoming increasingly difficult to forecast. These trends are important for businesses to know: 70% of all businesses are hurt by bad weather. Agriculture, construction, retail, travel and leisure are particularly vulnerable to rain, drought and uncertain weather forecasts.

As global climate changes companies are being asked the *one billion* dollar question: how is the weather impacting your bottom line? They cannot afford to guess. WeatherBill takes the guess work out by determining how much weather impacts a business's revenue and then provides customized protection.

By The Numbers: Top 10 Rainiest Cities in the U.S.

Note: A "Rainy Day" is defined as a day (midnight-to-midnight) with greater than 0.25 inches of rain

#1 Mobile, Alabama

Average Annual Rainfall: 67 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 59 days

Sweet Home Alabama is home to the rainiest US city in the lower 48: Mobile. The rain, however, didn't put a damper on plans by German industrial titan ThyssenKrupp to build a new \$3.7 billion state-of-the-art steel and stainless steel processing facility in the Azalea City. The new plant, scheduled to begin operations in 2010, is expected to be one of the largest private industrial development projects in the US. Thyssen and the thousands of construction firms it will supply with steel will be at the mercy of the elements to complete construction projects. Protecting against weather risk is one way to make sure the skies over Mobile stay so blue, at least financially speaking.

#2 Pensacola, Florida

Average Annual Rainfall: 65 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 56 days

Located off the Gulf of Mexico, Pensacola is no stranger to extreme weather events. On May 9th forecasters announced the first named storm of the 2007 season had formed just off Florida's coast, more than three weeks before the official start of the Atlantic hurricane season. Pensacola was far enough away that Subtropical Storm Andrea didn't do much damage but the Atlantic basin has been an active hurricane zone since 1995. Pensacola has seen its share of storms. Some forecasters say the increased activity is part of a natural climate cycle however the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says human-caused global warming has led to an increase in stronger hurricanes. Either way, businesses need to protect their revenue from potential weather risks.

#3 New Orleans, Louisiana

Average Annual Rainfall: 64 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 56 days

Severe weather can happen in just about every major US city. New Orleans knows this all too well. As the Crescent City makes a slow recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita industries are working hard to find new ways to weatherproof their revenue. As the global climate changes, and weather becomes increasingly difficult to predict, New Orleans' recovery is something every major city should pay close attention to. Since 2005's devastating hurricanes, business experts say financial and manufacturing industries are staying outside of the Gulf Coast to reduce risk. WeatherBill provides bottom line protection that takes the risk out of revenue, helping clear the way for increased growth.

#4 West Palm Beach, Florida

Average Annual Rainfall: 63 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 58 days

With all that annual rainfall, West Palm Beach seems like an unlikely city for a drought. But as of May 2007, the state of Florida is dealing with some of the worst drought conditions on record. South Florida is facing the state's most severe water restrictions where officials are working to cut water use by 45 percent. Experts say this drought is worse than the one in 2001, a weather event that cost the Florida

sugar industry \$100 million dollars. Golf courses and nurseries are feeling the heat too, not to mention state firefighters who are dealing with drought-related fires. With no relief in sight, weather contracts offer an option to sugar growers, golf course owners, nurseries and other weather-influenced industries to protect against drought conditions.

#5 Lafayette, Louisiana

Average Annual Rainfall: 62 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 55 days

From Mardi Gras week through late June chances are you'll find a crawfish boil every weekend somewhere in Louisiana. Lafayette is number five on the rainiest cities list, making it a great place to enjoy the tasty crustaceans that thrive in wet rice paddies. In May 2007, the problem for crawfish producers isn't lack of rain, it's white spot disease. A confirmed case has been reported in a quarantined pond in St. Martin Parish. Experts say the spread of the white spot parasite is aided by fluctuating spring temperatures. The disease is not a health threat to humans but can threaten a number of people's livelihoods in south Louisiana. Experts say the crawfish industry in Louisiana is now valued at more than \$95 million. It's an industry that needs to protect against unpredictable temperature trends than might fuel a disease that can wipe out their income.

#6 Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Average Annual Rainfall: 62 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 56 days

In the sixth rainiest city, Baton Rouge, the first signs of spring are thunderstorms. The city is rainiest in the second quarter, with an average annual rainfall of 16 inches. That's especially the case for the second quarter of 2007 when a slow moving system of thunderstorms dumped a record-breaking 8 inches of rain on Baton Rouge in two days. One parish declared a state of emergency. Some neighborhoods reported up to three feet of water. The good news: Baton Rouge was relieved of its drought status. The bad news: the city was shut down. Too much rain in the spring can sideline some businesses for the rest of the year.

#7 Miami, Florida

Average Annual Rainfall: 62 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 57 days

According to the Miami Beach government, every year the city hosts more than 35% of the ten million tourists who visit Greater Miami. The city's Art Deco Historic District is the second most popular tourist destination in Florida after Disney. The City of Miami Beach contributes more than \$11 billion to the area's economy each year. That's a whole lot of money in a city that has a whole lot of rain. Imagine how much higher that number will be once businesses start making money off the rain. Many tourists head to Miami's famous golf courses, except on those rainy days. According to WeatherBill's research into the number of Golf Playable Days (GPD) – www.weatherbill.com/golfstudy - Miami gets between 302 to 317 days a year that are dry enough and warm enough to play on. Over the past 30 years, the number has decreased. During the second quarter, Miami gets the most rain of any US city (18 inches). Keep in mind that's before the brunt of hurricane season's increased rainfall.

#8 Port Arthur, Texas

Average Annual Rainfall: 61 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 51 days

It's a good thing "Bobby flagged a diesel down, just before the rain" in Janis Joplin's home town of Port Arthur because there's a whole lot of it. Windshield wipers are slapping time frequently in the city where the legendary rock and blues singer was born and raised. Port Arthur continues recovery efforts after Hurricane Rita's devastation. Port Arthur recorded the highest sustained winds of any city impacted by Rita at 198 miles per hour. Today, WeatherBill doesn't offer protection against wind, however, Rita's destruction in Port Arthur included flooding, something WeatherBill can protect against with heavy rain contracts. That's important protection for not just the city but for the entire US: Port Arthur is the home of three major refineries. When bad weather hits Port Arthur, sometimes we all pay... at the pumps.

#9 Tallahassee, Florida

Average Annual Rainfall: 61 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 56 days

Weather protection is important to the economy of Tallahassee. The ninth rainiest city maintains one of the fastest growing manufacturing industries in Florida. In a state known for hot, humid summers, Florida's capital can get snow in the winter and has the widest range of temperatures from summer to winter. Top that off with the city's number nine ranking on the rainiest cities list and you get some of the most uncertain weather trends in the US. Manufacturers depend on knowing the weather to maintain their ability to deliver goods on time. In a city where the weather trend is becoming more uncertain, weather protection is a must.

#10 Lake Charles, Louisiana

Average Annual Rainfall: 58 inches

Average Annual Rainy Days: 50 days

If confetti counted as precipitation it would make Lake Charles the rainiest city in the US. That's because the city boasts more than 75 annual festivals. But confetti doesn't count so the *Festival Capital of Louisiana* comes in at number 10. WeatherBill can offer protection for a single event or an entire weekend of bad weather, perfect for ensuring the financial success of festivals. Lake Charles is also home to two casinos. While the "weather" inside those casinos never changes, with almost 50 days of rain a year the casinos could be missing out on revenue from weather weary drivers.

For more on the Top 10 Rainiest Cities report visit www.weatherbill.com/reports/rainstudy .