

# Central Indiana

## March 2015

### Climate Summary

*Tied for 59<sup>th</sup> Coldest on record at Indianapolis*

*68<sup>th</sup> Wettest on record at Indianapolis*

*26<sup>th</sup> Snowiest on record at Indianapolis*

## Temperatures

March began very cold in the wake of a snow storm that dropped several inches of snow on February 28<sup>th</sup> into March 1<sup>st</sup>. Strong high pressure expanded south into central Indiana and with a fresh snowpack present, highs bottomed out in the upper teens and 20s in many places on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The coldest morning of the month took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> with much of the area falling below zero. Temperatures began to recover on the 7<sup>th</sup> as warmer air arrived. Highs rose into the 40s in many places from the 7<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup>, enabling much of the snow to completely melt. High temperatures made it into the 60s across for the first time in 2015 across all but far northern sections of central Indiana on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

After a brief cooldown back into the lower and middle 50s as rain impacted the region, the warmest weather of the month arrived from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> with high pressure and southerly winds. Highs rose into the 70s across central Indiana on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The passage of a cold front early on the 17<sup>th</sup> brought an abrupt end to the early spring preview as highs fell back into the 40s. Highs briefly returned into the upper 50s and lower 60s on the 21<sup>st</sup> before more substantial cooling arrived for much of the rest of the month. The chilly unsettled weather reached its low point on the 27<sup>th</sup> when most areas remained in the 30s with cloudy skies and flurries. After the coldest March 27 in 40 years in Indianapolis, the morning low on the 28<sup>th</sup> missed tying the daily record low of 16 from 1887 by one degree. The return of high pressure and southerly winds brought a

warming trend to end the month, with highs warming into the 60s in most locations on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

Site	March 2015 Avg Temp	March 2015 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	39.2	<b>-3.0</b>	74 on 16	2 on 6
Lafayette	36.1	<b>-4.7</b>	72 on 16	-6 on 6
Muncie	36.8	<b>-2.8</b>	72 on 16	2 on 6
Terre Haute	38.8	<b>-4.0</b>	73 on 16	-6 on 6
Bloomington	40.7	<b>-2.2</b>	73 on 16	-1 on 6
Shelbyville	39.9	<b>-1.9</b>	75 on 16	-2 on 6
Indy – Eagle Crk.	38.4	<b>-4.0</b>	73 on 16	1 on 6

At Indianapolis, there were 13 days with above normal average temperatures, 15 days with below normal average temperatures, and 3 days with normal temperatures.

March 2015 was tied for the 59<sup>th</sup> coldest March in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

## Precipitation

March melted liquid precipitation ranged from below normal in northern Indiana to much above normal in southern Indiana. Precipitation in central Indiana was normal to above normal. Monthly totals measured from one-half of an inch in extreme north central and northeast Indiana to over 8 inches in southwest Indiana. Much of the state received between 2 and 6 inches of liquid precipitation.

Extensive to significant river flooding returned to southern Indiana in March. With lowland flooding already in progress from melting snow and prior rainfall, rains of 1 to 4 inches on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> caused the highest river levels in southern Indiana since April 2014. Much of the southern half of Indiana received 1 to 2 inches of rainfall on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> as two separate low pressure waves tracked through the Ohio Valley. This kept river levels near or above flood stage in some areas, especially along the lower Wabash and White Rivers.

Site	March 2015 Precipitation	March 2015 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	3.53	<b>-0.03</b>	0.63 on 25	5 days 5-9
Lafayette(*)	0.78	<b>-1.89</b>	0.26 on 26	6 days 4-9
Muncie	3.02	<b>+0.07</b>	0.60 on 25	5 days 5-9
Terre Haute	3.40	<b>+0.03</b>	0.71 on 13	5 days 5-9
Bloomington	4.64	<b>+0.76</b>	1.12 on 13	4 days 6-9 and 15-18
Shelbyville	3.86	<b>+0.43</b>	0.74 on 13	5 days 5-9
Indy–Eagle Crk.(**)	3.07	<b>-0.23</b>	0.71 on 25	5 days 5-9

(\*) Lafayette precipitation data was not available on 3/10.

(\*\*) Indy-Eagle Creek precipitation data was not available on 3/10.

March 2014 was the 68<sup>th</sup> wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

## Snowfall

The active weather pattern of February continued into the first half of March. The largest snowfall of the season fell during the last hours of February and the first day of March in central Indiana. The central Indiana area received from 4 to 12 inches of snow. At Indianapolis, the monthly average snowfall of 2.9 inches was exceeded within the first 5 hours of the month. The 7.1 inches received from late on February 28<sup>th</sup> into March 1<sup>st</sup> brought the snow year total for Indianapolis up to 25.6 inches, just a few tenths shy of the snow year average.

Quickly following on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, Indiana was on the northern fringe of an historic snowstorm in Kentucky. Extreme southwest and south central Indiana received nearly a foot of snow. Snowfall amounts decreased northward to only 1 to 3 inches along U.S. Highway 50 in southern Indiana.

As a result of these storms, monthly snowfall was above normal for nearly the entire state in March. Only portions of northern Indiana received normal to below normal snowfall. Totals ranged from around two inches in extreme northeast Indiana to nearly a foot in portions of central and extreme southern Indiana.

## Severe Weather

No severe weather occurred across central Indiana during the month of March. Many locations did experience their first thunderstorms of the year during the early morning of the 25<sup>th</sup>.

For information on severe weather in other areas during March, visit the Storm Prediction Center "Severe Weather Event Summaries" website at <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/online/>.

## Miscellaneous

The maximum wind gust at the Indianapolis International Airport was 36 mph from the south during the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup> ahead of a weak cold front. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 15 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on three days. Ice pellets or freezing rain and drizzle was reported on two days during March. Thunder occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

## April 2015 Outlook

The official outlook for April 2015 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance of below normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 53.0 degrees. The outlook also calls for equal chances for above, near or below normal precipitation. The average precipitation for April at Indianapolis is 3.81", with 0.2" of snowfall.

***Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.***