

# Central Indiana

## March 2016

### Climate Summary

*8<sup>th</sup> Warmest on record at Indianapolis*

*Tied for 45<sup>th</sup> Wettest on record at Indianapolis*

*Tied for 45<sup>th</sup> Least Snowiest on record at Indianapolis*

## Temperatures

March definitely arrived in the form of a lion, as chilly temperatures and occasional snow and rain showers were common through the first few days of the month. Highs largely remained under 50 through the 5<sup>th</sup>, but as it turned out, this would be the coolest stretch of weather for the entire month. A transition to southerly winds brought much warmer air into the Ohio Valley beginning on the 6<sup>th</sup> and continuing through most of the following two weeks. Highs throughout this period were primarily in the 60s and 70s with lows in the 40s and 50s. This extended stretch of temperatures above freezing prompted an early start to the growing season in many parts of the southern half of central Indiana, as budding and flowering of trees and plants were common by the third week of March. Many locations saw their warmest temperature during this period on the afternoon of the 15<sup>th</sup> as highs soared into the middle and upper 70s.

Cooler and more typical temperatures for March returned for a few days beginning on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Most of central Indiana experienced one or two mornings with subfreezing temperatures during this timeframe. However, the cooldown was brief with a return to the 60s for the 22<sup>nd</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup>. After a brief one day cooldown in the wake of a frontal passage that included morning lows near to just below freezing, temperatures once again rose over the Easter weekend, culminating with many areas enjoying highs in the middle and upper 70s on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Highs fell back into the 50s for

the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> after a cold front came through before returning to the upper 60s and lower 70s to end the month on a mild note.

Average temperatures for March were near 10 degrees warmer than March 2015 averages, making this the warmest March since the record breaking one experienced in 2012. 16 of the 31 days in March were at or above 60 in Indianapolis, which ended up more than the combined 60 degree days from March 2013, 2014 and 2015. The 5 days at or above 70 were the most in Indianapolis since the 14 70+ days from March 2012.

Site	March 2016 Avg Temp	March 2016 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	49.2	<b>+7.0</b>	76 on 27	18 on 2
Lafayette	46.4	<b>+5.6</b>	72 on 15	16 on 2
Muncie	48.4	<b>+8.8</b>	76 on 27	21 on 2
Terre Haute	49.0	<b>+6.2</b>	77 on 15	24 on 2
Bloomington	49.6	<b>+6.7</b>	77 on 15	23 on 2
Shelbyville	50.4	<b>+8.6</b>	78 on 27	22 on 2
Indy – Eagle Crk.	49.1	<b>+6.7</b>	75 on 27	20 on 2

At Indianapolis, there were 20 days with above normal average temperatures, 8 days with below normal average temperatures, and 3 days with normal temperatures.

March 2016 was the 8<sup>th</sup> warmest March in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

## Precipitation

Monthly rainfall and melted precipitation for March was normal to above normal. Totals ranged from 3 inches in portions of northern Indiana to over 7 inches in south central Indiana. Much of the state received between 3 and 6 inches for the month. Precipitation fell in the form of rain, snow and hail.

There were two significant rainfall periods during March. The first was during the 7-day period from the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> when 0.50 to 4 inches of fell across the state. The heaviest rainfall of 2 to 4 inches occurred along and east the I-69 corridor in southern and central Indiana. The second was during the 8-day period from the 24<sup>th</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup>. Widespread rains totaled 1 to more than 3 inches across the state. The heaviest rainfall was in central and southern Indiana.

Lowland river flooding returned to portions of western and southern Indiana beginning on the 11<sup>th</sup>. A dry period extended from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup> and allowed flooding

to end. Minor river flooding returned again to western Indiana during the last hours of March and continued into early April.

Site	March 2016 Precipitation	March 2016 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	4.20	<b>+0.64</b>	0.95 on 24	4 days 20-23
Lafayette	4.29	<b>+1.62</b>	0.78 on 30 and 31	6 days 18-23
Muncie	5.07	<b>+2.12</b>	0.89 on 13 and 24	3 days 21-23
Terre Haute	4.00	<b>+0.63</b>	1.26 on 30	4 days 20-23
Bloomington	4.56	<b>+0.68</b>	0.92 on 24	4 days 15-18
Shelbyville	4.75	<b>+1.32</b>	0.76 on 10	4 days 15-18 and 20-23
Indy–Eagle Crk.	2.44	<b>-0.86</b>	0.77 on 24	4 days 15-18 and 20-23

March 2016 was tied for the 45<sup>th</sup> wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

## Snowfall

Snowfall during March was confined to the first 5 days of the month. Monthly snowfall totals ranged from a trace in central Indiana to 8 inches in the South Bend area of northern Indiana.

The most significant snow event for central Indiana occurred during the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> when 1 to 3 inches fell along and north of I-70 in central Indiana.

## Severe Weather

The first significant severe weather event to impact central Indiana for 2016 came on the afternoon and evening of the 27<sup>th</sup>, Easter Sunday. While thunderstorms produced some localized wind damage, the bulk of the severe weather came in the form of large hail across central Indiana. Hail to the size of ping pong balls occurred with a storm that track across the southern Indianapolis metro area, impacting Southport and Beech Grove in particular. Ping pong ball size hail also fell in Randolph County near Parker City.

Additional strong thunderstorms developed during the afternoon and evening of the 31<sup>st</sup> ahead of a cold front. Most of the storms produced small hail, with one severe

thunderstorm moving through southwestern Shelby County and producing strong wind gusts that knocked down a few trees.

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 47 mph from the west on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 15 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Thunder occurred on four days in March.

## April 2016 Outlook

The official outlook for April 2016 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a slightly greater chance of above normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 53.0 degrees. The outlook also calls for a slightly greater chance of near to drier than normal conditions. The average precipitation for April at Indianapolis is 3.81", with 0.2" of snowfall.

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