

# The Weather Whisper

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

➤ NWS Des Moines Staff host and attend local conference

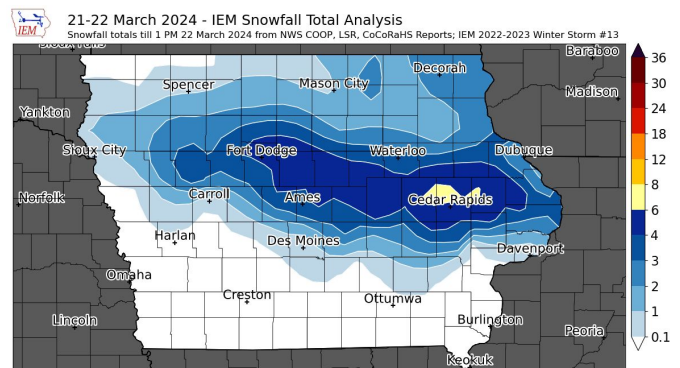
## Active End of March

Brooke Hagenhoff, Lead Meteorologist

In like a lamb, out like a lion. That's about how this March has gone, as a quiet start to the month shifted to a rather active ending. In the last 10 days of the month several systems passed across Iowa, bringing beneficial moisture in the form of showers, thunderstorms, snow, and ice.

This active period really kicked off with a banded snow event that surprised many, on March 21-22. While light snow was expected over parts of the state, a heavy band set up, dumping 5-7" of snow in a narrow band from Fort Dodge to Cedar Rapids. This band was difficult to capture as these bands

are notoriously difficult to pin down with confidence or much lead time. This system was followed by several rounds of rain and snow to finish the month. Much of the northern half of the state picked up a few rounds of light snow in the final week of the month while the southern portion of Iowa mainly saw rain. This included a round of thunderstorms across the state on the evening of March 25th. These storms did not become severe, but a few in Adair, Guthrie, and Greene counties did produce some small hail. This was part of a large system impacting



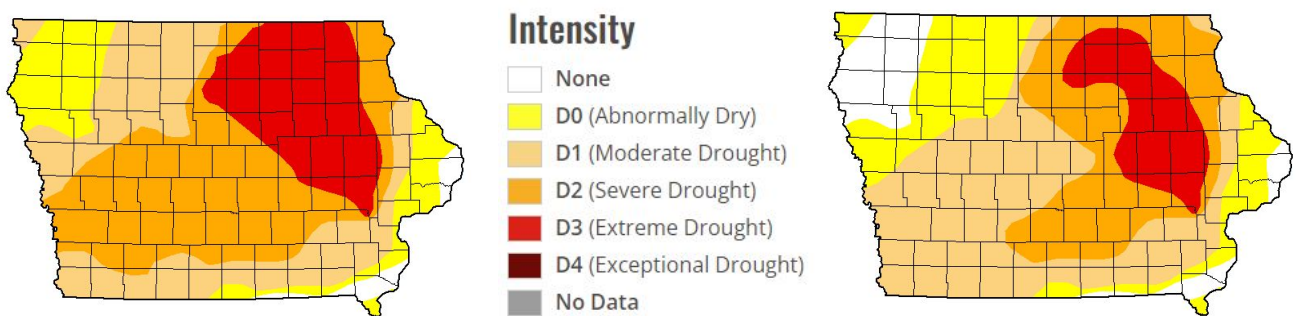
Snow totals from March 21-22, 2024

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much of the central US, from Texas all the way to the Great Lakes. With deep upper level flow out of the south, dust kicked up from the strong thunderstorms in the south made its way to Iowa before falling within raindrops over the state. Many awoke on the 26th to [dirty cars](#).

While Iowa remains in the midst of a multi-year drought, the precipitation this month has certainly brought some welcome relief. The weekly drought monitor released on March 28th shows some improvement that has occurred thanks to recent precipitation, however there is still substantial ground to be made up.



The drought monitor from March 19 (left) compared to March 26 (right) shows a 20% reduction in D2-D4 drought conditions across Iowa due to late March precipitation. The drought monitor is released every Thursday, containing data through the Tuesday of that week. The next outlook is scheduled for April 4th, which will include the precipitation that fell over the weekend through April 2nd. More info at <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>. (Click on images to view larger.)

# Central Iowa NWA Conference

Ashley Bury, Meteorologist

At the end of March, the Central Iowa Chapter of the National Weather Association (NWA) held the 26th Annual Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference which brought together NWS employees, broadcast meteorologists, emergency managers, students, and more during the three-day conference. Several presentations focused on severe events such as the March 31, 2023 tornado outbreak, the 25th anniversary of the May 3, 1999 Moore, Oklahoma F5 tornado, the 50th anniversary of the 1974 Super Tornado Outbreak, which was compared & contrasted with the 2011 Super Tornado Outbreak, along with many other topics. Aside from the presentations, other activities during the conference included a radar workshop led by NWS Meteorologists, which allowed attendees to get hands-on experience in the process of radar interrogation and the issuance of (simulated) severe thunderstorm and/or tornado warnings, as well as a poster session that allowed researchers an alternative way to present their findings on various topics to the attendees.

On the Cover:

Changing conditions greeted some central to northern Iowans the morning of 3/24/24 as a wintry mix changed to a heavy, wet snow resulting in lowering visibilities and roads quickly becoming snow covered for a short period of time before precipitation changed to rain, quickly melting the snow. Seen here are big flakes falling on I-35 near Williams around 10:55 AM. Image courtesy of the Iowa DOT.



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