

Weather Bureau/National Weather Service History in Illinois

Location	Type	Years	Details
Aurora	CWSU	1975(?)-present	The Chicago Center Weather Service Unit (CWSU) opened in the mid 1970's.
Cairo	SigSvc WBO WSO	1871-1987	The Signal Service opened a station at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in 1871, and assumed by the Weather Bureau in 1893. The station was reduced to a part-time office with one staff member in 1983, after most of its functions were assumed by a new office in Paducah, KY. The office permanently closed in 1987.
Chicago/City	SigSvc WBO HQ WBMO DFO FAWS WBFO WSFO WSMO	1870-1977	Chicago was one of the Weather Bureau's early "district offices". The first district office in 1891 provided forecasts for northern Illinois and northwest Indiana; by 1894, this district office covered an area from the Rocky Mountains to the Great Lakes. The origins of the office date back to 10/15/1870, when the Signal Service established observations in Chicago. At the end of 1943, a Flight Advisory Weather Service (FAWS, precursor to today's Center Weather Service Unit) was established at Midway Airport, operating until 1952. A regional headquarters office was in operation from 1942-1949, before being consolidated in Kansas City. The District Forecast Office was moved to just east of the University of Chicago once the FAWS closed, although some operations remained downtown until 1970. A WSR-57 weather radar was installed at the University office in 1962. The office moved to a new facility on Pershing Road in 1970, although the radar (and Weather Bureau Meteorological Observatory) remained at the old site until 1972. Radar operations were moved to Marseilles in 1974. The forecast office was moved to a new facility near O'Hare Airport in late 1977.
Chicago/Midway	WBAS WSO WSCMO	1928-1980	The Weather Bureau established aviation observations at Midway Airport 2/13/1928. The official climatological observations for Chicago started at this location in July 1942, taking over from the University of Chicago. These climate observations continued until 1/16/1980, when they were transferred to O'Hare Airport. A WSR-3 radar was installed 4/19/1958; it was replaced by a WSR-57 at the University office in January 1963.
Chicago/O'Hare	WBAS WSFO WSO WSCMO	1956-1996	The Weather Bureau began operations at the new O'Hare Field in 1956; the site became the official Chicago climatological site in 1980, having moved from Midway Airport. The forecast office moved to a new facility on the edge of the airport in late 1977. The NWS operated separate forecast and observation offices for a time, then combined them at the airport in 1989. In 1993, the office was again split, with the forecast function moving to Romeoville. NWS operations at the airport ceased in 1996, when government contractors and the Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) took over.
Effingham	WBAS	1944-1947	A Weather Bureau Airways Station was jointly operated with the Civil Aeronautics Administration. The CAA previously had run the station since 1933, and assumed sole responsibility again 2/1/1947.
Joliet	WBAS	1937-1964	The Weather Bureau opened an Airways Station at the end of October 1937, initially taking surface observations, then adding upper-air observations in 1939. The station was closed 3/14/1953, with its upper-air

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functions moved to Green Bay, WI. The Weather Bureau also operated its Radiosonde Reconditioning Center in Joliet beginning in 1945, which reconditioned radiosondes for use. This center was in operation through at least 1964.

La Salle	WBO	1904-1913	
<u>Lincoln</u>	WFO	1995-present	This office was established in early 1995 to replace the Springfield and Peoria NWS offices. It received a WSR-88D radar, and is part of the modernized NWS station network. The Lincoln office assumed additional forecast and warning responsibility in the late 1990's.
Marseilles	WSMO	1974-1994	This office was part of the NWS radar network, and had no official warning or forecast function. It served as the radar office for the Chicago area, and was closed after the WSR-88D was commissioned in Romeoville.
<u>Moline</u>	WBAS WBO WSO	1926-1995	A Weather Bureau Airport Station (WBAS) opened at the northeast corner of the Moline Airport (now Quad City Int'l Airport) 10/1/1926, while the Davenport WB city office remained open. This office was relocated to new facilities on the airport grounds around Christmas 1939, April 1961, and February 1991. The Moline office absorbed the functions of the Davenport city office, which closed 2/28/1953. A WSR-74C was installed at Moline 8/30/1977. In 1994, a new Davenport office was constructed. Warning responsibilities were transferred from Moline to Davenport 2/20/1995, with observing functions transferred to contract observers at the end of June 1995.
<u>Peoria</u>	WBO WBAS WSO	1905-1995	A new Weather Bureau office was established on the grounds of what is now Bradley University, in February 1905, with its first telegraph installed in early 1906. The office began 24 hour operations in 1931, then went back down to part-time operations in 1953. A Weather Bureau Airways Station was opened at the Peoria Municipal Airport in 1935. Operations of the city office were transferred to the airport office 5/4/1943, and the city office was closed 8/15/1944. Upper-air observations began in 1956, and continued until being transferred to the new NWS office in Davenport, IA, in February 1995. The entire office was closed 10/1/1995, after its functions had been transferred to a new office in Lincoln.
Rockford	WBAS WSO WSCMO	1958-1997	The Weather Bureau took over airways observations from the CAA in November 1958. The Weather Service Office closed on 8/1/1995 after ASOS was commissioned, and the NWS operated a contract station there for a couple years before being taken over by the FAA.
Romeoville	WSFO WFO	1993-present	This NWS Forecast Office was moved from O'Hare Airport to the Lewis University campus north of Joliet. It received a NEXRAD radar. As part of the NWS modernization, forecasts for northwest, central and southern Illinois were transferred to other offices.
Salem	WSCMO	1969-1988	This NWS office was part of the upper air observation network, but did not perform any warning or forecast functions. The contract weather station opened in June 1969. It was closed when the observation function was transferred to the new NWS office in Paducah, KY in 1988.
<u>Springfield</u>	SigSvc WBO	1879-1995	A Signal Service office was established in downtown Springfield in July 1879, and transferred to the Weather Bureau in 1891. A downtown office

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WBAS
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remained in the area into the mid 1950's. During the 1890's, upper-air observations were taken utilizing kites. An airport station was established in November 1935 at the old Southwest Airport, on the present south side of town; this was moved to Capital Airport in 1947, on the north side. The office was closed in 1995, with operations transferring to the new office in Lincoln.