

Central Indiana

February 2015

Climate Summary

Tied for 5th Coldest on record at Indianapolis

35th Driest on record at Indianapolis

15th Snowiest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

Persistent and repeated surges of cold arctic air into the Ohio Valley contributed to making February 2015 the coldest February since 2007 and only the second coldest February since 1979. Oddly enough, the warmest part of the month came during the first week. High temperatures rose into the 50s on the 7th and 8th across central Indiana as strong southwest winds brought milder air into the region. These would be the only two days temperatures rose above 50 degrees during the month.

The passage of a cold front on the evening of the 8th brought an abrupt end to the spring-like temperatures. From this point forward in February, temperatures would almost entirely remain below 40, with numerous days even struggling to make it to 30. The combination of renewed surges of bitterly cold Arctic air and the gradual expansion of a snowpack during the second half of the month ensured temperatures well below normal. The coldest air peaked on the 19th when several locations were unable to even rise out of the single digits for highs. For Indianapolis, the high of 9 degrees on the 19th not only set the record for the coldest high for the day, but also marked the latest occurrence of single digits highs since February 21, 1963. Several mornings experienced subzero lows during the last ten days of the month, with a number of locations falling to -10 to -20 degrees on the 20th and 24th. Indianapolis broke their record low by 4 degrees on the 24th, falling to -6.

Overall, temperatures averaged 10 to 14 degrees below normal for the month of February across central Indiana.

Site	February 2015 Avg Temp	February 2015 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	20.2	-11.9	57 on 8	-6 on 20 and 24
Lafayette	17.4	-13.1	52 on 8	-6 on 20
Muncie	18.3	-11.4	56 on 8	-6 on 20 and 28
Terre Haute	20.2	-12.2	58 on 8	-15 on 24
Bloomington	20.5	-12.6	58 on 7	-16 on 20 and 24
Shelbyville	20.9	-10.8	58 on 8	-15 on 24
Indy – Eagle Crk.	19.1	-12.9	56 on 8	-7 on 20 and 24

At Indianapolis, there were 5 days with above normal average temperatures, 1 day with normal average temperatures and 22 days with below normal average temperatures.

February 2015 was tied for the 5th coldest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation

February melted liquid precipitation was below normal for almost the entire state. Only portions of the lake effect areas of northern Indiana received normal to above normal liquid precipitation. Monthly totals measured from near 1 inch in western Indiana to close to 3 inches in portions of southern and northern Indiana. Much of the state received between 1 and 2 inches of liquid precipitation.

Limited flooding occurred along the Wabash River in western Indiana from the 9th through the 12th. The minor flood was caused by snowmelt. Temperatures rose into the 40s and 50s during a brief warm spell on the 7th and 8th and nearly all of the snow in the upper Wabash River Basin vanished. Snow would return during the second half of the month as storms on the 15th-16th, 21st and 28th into March 1 produced several inches of snowfall across the region.

Site	February 2015 Precipitation	February 2015 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	1.34	-0.98	0.47 on 21	3 days 5-7
Lafayette	0.43	-1.33	0.31 on 1	3 days 5-7
Muncie	1.01	-1.30	0.46 on 1	4 days 22-25
Terre Haute	1.17	-0.76	0.38 on 1	7 days 5-11
Bloomington	1.36	-1.40	0.55 on 21	4 days 22-25

Shelbyville	1.10	-1.26	0.46 on 21	4 days 22-25
Indy – Eagle Crk.	0.73	-1.40	0.27 on 21	6 days 5-10

February 2015 was the 35th driest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Snowfall

Four significant winter storms affected portions of Indiana during February. At the very beginning of the month, northern Indiana received 8 to more than 20 inches of snow. On the 15th and 16th southern Indiana measured from 3 to 9 inches of snow from a storm that dumped over a foot of snow in central Kentucky. Another storm followed on the 21st as central Indiana received 3 to 7 inches of snow, the biggest snowfall of the season for the area. A fourth storm began on the evening of the 28th, continuing into the first day of March, bringing the largest snowfall of the season for much of central Indiana.

Monthly snowfall was above normal for the entire state in February with near record amounts for the South Bend area. Snowfall ranged from 6 inches in western Indiana to more than 30 inches in the lake effect areas of northern Indiana. Nearly all of the precipitation in northern and much of central Indiana was in the form of snow or sleet. Only southern Indiana received rain which occurred at the very beginning of the month and as glaze or light freezing rain on the 21st. Snow developed on the evening of the 28th, continuing into the first day of March. Many locations had already received 1 to 2 inches as February ended, with several more inches of snow following through the morning of March 1.

More than half of the winter season snowfall (December-February) fell during the last half of February for many locations. The 13.8 inches of snow accumulated for the month made this the 15th snowiest February on record in Indianapolis.

Severe Weather

No severe weather occurred in central Indiana during the month of February.

For information on severe weather in other areas during February, 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 51 mph from the west-northwest on the 14th with the passage of an arctic cold front. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 17 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on the 1st. Ice pellets occurred on the 1st and 4th, and freezing rain and drizzle was reported on the 9th.

March 2015 Outlook

The official outlook for March 2015 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance of below normal temperatures across much of central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 42.2 degrees. The outlook also calls for an equal chance of above, below or near normal precipitation. The average precipitation for March at Indianapolis is 3.56", with 2.6" of snowfall.

Spring 2015 Outlook

The official outlook for meteorological spring (March-May 2015) from the Climate Prediction Center indicates an equal chance of above, below or near normal temperatures and precipitation. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the spring season is 52.6 degrees. The average spring season precipitation is 12.42 inches along with 2.8 inches of snowfall, most of which typically falls during the month of March.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.