

Central Indiana

January 2020

Climate Summary

16th Warmest on Record at Indianapolis

18th Wettest on Record at Indianapolis

8th Least Snowiest on Record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

Typical winter temperatures were hard to find throughout much of January as most of the cold air remained well north of the region. Highs were primarily in the 40s through the first week of the month with lows in the 20s and 30s. Beginning on the 9th, a surge of warmer air into the Ohio Valley pumped high temperatures into the 50s and in the lower and middle 60s early on the 11th, the warmest day of the month.

Colder temperatures returned through the middle of the month but in general, remained above normal in the 40s. The passage of a strong cold front on the 18th ushered in the coldest temperatures of January as an Arctic airmass briefly expanded across the region. Highs on the 19th were only in the teens and 20s, with low temperatures in the single digits and teens. Only modest recovery occurred on the 20th and 21st before temperatures recovered back to near normal levels. With the exception of temperatures mainly in the 40s on the 23rd and 24th, highs were largely near normal and in the 30s for the rest of the month with lows ranging from the middle 20s to lower 30s. The warmer lows at night over the last several days of the month were due in large part to an extended stretch of cloudy skies.

January temperatures ended up averaging roughly from 6 to 9° above normal across Central Indiana, producing the warmest January for many since 2017 and for Indianapolis, only the 3rd January since 2008 that experienced a monthly average above

30°. The monthly average low temperature of 28.3° in Indianapolis, was the warmest January average minimum temperature since 2006.

| Site | January 2020 Avg Temp | January 2020 Difference from Normal | Highest Temperature | Lowest Temperature |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Indianapolis | 35.0 | +6.9 | 64 on 11 | 9 on 19 |
| Lafayette | 33.3 | +6.8 | 60 on 11 | 5 on 19 |
| Muncie | 36.0 | +9.5 | 65 on 11 | 9 on 19 |
| Terre Haute | 35.2 | +7.0 | 63 on 11 | 10 on 19 |
| Bloomington | 36.2 | +6.8 | 63 on 11 | 11 on 19 |
| Shelbyville | 36.6 | +7.9 | 65 on 11 | 12 on 19 |
| Indy – Eagle Crk. | 34.9 | +6.8 | 64 on 11 | 9 on 19 |

At Indianapolis, there were 26 days with above normal average temperatures, 5 days with below normal average temperatures and no days with normal average temperatures.

January 2020 was the 16th warmest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation and Snowfall

Hydrologically, January was an active month with many area rivers at or above flood stage for much of the month.

Light precipitation fell across central Indiana from the 2nd to 5th of the month bringing around a half inch of rain to the state. A strong low pressure system moving from the Gulf northward through central Indiana combined with a powerful low level jet to bring the first period of heavy rain for the month from the 10th to the 12th. Three to five inches of rain fell across central Indiana with this system, which led to some of the highest flooding since last June. This flooding would continue into the end of the month across the lower White and Wabash basins. At Indianapolis, two daily rainfall records were set during this event. Saturday, January 11th saw 1.87 inches of rain, which broke the old record of 1.29 inches set in 1924. Sunday, January 12th 1.52 inches fell, breaking the previous record of 1.16 inches set in 2005.

The next big system to impact central Indiana arrived on the evening of January 17th. Initially this system brought a wintry mix that night, which transitioned to heavy rain on the 18th. Precipitation totals of another 1 to 1.5 inches fell across the area and led to

brief renewed flooding along smaller streams across Indiana and helped to prolong flooding in areas that were still flooding from the rains on the 10th to 12th.

Additional rain of less than a half inch fell from the 23rd to the 25th. During this event, the only measurable snow of January fell for much of central Indiana. Snowfall amounts were generally less than a half inch with slightly higher amounts in north central Indiana.

| Site | January 2020 Precipitation | January 2020 Difference from Normal | Wettest Day | Longest Dry Stretch |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Indianapolis | 5.32 | +2.66 | 1.87 on 10 | 4 days 5-8 |
| Lafayette | 3.85 | +1.99 | 1.72 on 11 | 5 days 26-30 |
| Muncie | 2.80 | +0.57 | 1.15 on 10 | 4 days 5-8 |
| Terre Haute | 5.64 | +3.28 | 2.27 on 10 | 4 days 5-8 and 13-16 |
| Bloomington | 6.50 | +3.19 | 2.42 on 10 | 5 days 26-30 |
| Shelbyville | 5.63 | +3.24 | 1.73 on 10 | 4 days 5-8 and 27-30 |
| Indy – Eagle Crk. | 3.24 | +1.03 | 1.34 on 10 | 4 days 5-8 |

January 2020 was the 18th wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Severe Weather

No severe weather occurred across central Indiana throughout January.

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

Miscellaneous

The maximum wind gust at Indianapolis International Airport was 57 mph out of the west during the afternoon of the 18th. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 19 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on the 14th and 15th. Freezing rain or

drizzle was recorded on 4 days, and ice pellets on 3 days. Thunder was reported on the 9th and the 11th.

February 2020 Outlook

The official outlook for February 2019 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance for above normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 32.1 degrees. There is an equal chance of near, above or below normal precipitation for central Indiana. The average precipitation for February at Indianapolis is 2.32 inches, with 6.5 inches of snowfall.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.