

Central Indiana

January 2021

Climate Summary

51st Warmest on Record at Indianapolis

Tied for 76th Driest on Record at Indianapolis

Tied for 46th Snowiest on Record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

January was a month that saw temperatures above normal but not extensively so as highs in the 30s and 40s were common throughout the month. Temperatures averaged 3 to 6° above normal for January.

The warmest stretch of days occurred in two spots during the month: the first came from the 12th through the 15th where highs consistently warmed into the mid and upper 40s in multiple spots, and the second came about a week later on the 21st which ended up being the warmest day of January with highs ranging from the upper 40s to lower 50s.

Low temperatures throughout the month were commonly in the 20s with a few nights in the 30s at times. The coldest temperatures of January were focused primarily during the last 7 to 8 days of the month when temperatures fell into the teens on multiple nights with a few locations dropping into the single digits. No temperatures below zero were recorded across central Indiana in January.

Indianapolis interestingly never recorded a temperature at or above 50° throughout January despite the monthly average temperature finishing up about 3° above normal. This became the first January in 20 years where the temperature had failed to reach 50° or warmer at any time during the month.

Site	January 2021 Avg Temp	January 2021 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	31.0	+2.9	49 on 21	12 on 23
Lafayette	31.7	+5.2	51 on 21	9 on 23
Muncie	32.5	+6.0	48 on 21	13 on 23
Terre Haute	31.8	+3.6	51 on 21	7 on 28
Bloomington	32.2	+2.8	51 on 21	10 on 29
Shelbyville	33.4	+4.7	51 on 21	11 on 23
Indy – Eagle Crk.	31.3	+3.2	48 on 21	12 on 23

At Indianapolis, there were 21 days with above normal average temperatures, 9 days with below normal average temperatures and 1 day with normal average temperatures.

January 2021 was the 51st warmest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation and Snowfall

January was a relatively dry and temperate month. Northeastern parts of the state were the driest, with only 1 to 1.5 inches of precipitation for the month. Central and northwestern parts of the state saw 1.5 to 2 inches. South of I-70 received 2 to 3 inches, while some locations along the Ohio River topped out the state at 3 to 4 inches. Most of the state ranged from near normal to around an inch below normal, while some areas in eastern Indiana near the Ohio state line were 1 to 2 inches below normal. Total snowfall for the month ranged from over a foot in portions of north central Indiana, to around 2 inches in the south. In Indianapolis, the month ended with 7.9 inches of snow. For temperatures, the month ended nearly three degrees above normal at Indianapolis, but the high temperature never reached 50 degrees during the month while the lowest minimum temperature was 12 degrees.

One of the heavier precipitation events for the month occurred on January 1st with widespread areas of around an inch of rain. Portions of north central Indiana received light snow in addition to the rain. This rain would lead to rises on the White river with a flood warning issued for the White River near Petersburg. The river would end up cresting just below flood stage, but would remain elevated for several days before returning closer to normal.

A 3 day period of light rain and snow from January 15th through the 17th brought additional snow accumulations to much of central Indiana. Over the course of the 3 days, precipitation amounted to between a quarter and half inch of liquid equivalent from 2-4 inches of snow. Snow remained light and with relatively warm ground temperatures, accumulations were generally limited to the overnight hours with little

accumulation during the daytime. During the evening hours of January 27th, a system brought snow to much of south central and southern Indiana. Most areas saw 1-3 inches of snow with isolated amounts of over 4 inches in portions of Martin County. Areas north of this swath of snow received a light dusting of snow with 0.5 inches at the NWS office in Indianapolis.

The biggest snowfall event of the month occurred during the weekend of January 30th to 31st. During the late afternoon and evening hours of Saturday January 30th, an area of rain arrived across southwest Indiana. As this initial band moved to the northeast, it would transition to snow bringing periods of heavy snow starting around 6 PM that continued through 10 PM. Snow fell across several bands with additional light snow falling through the night. During the initial period of snow, the heaviest amounts fell generally along and immediately south of I-74. During the overnight hours into Sunday, snow began to accumulate more heavily across north central Indiana. Snow would transition back to rain during the overnight hours of Saturday into Sunday for much of the area before transitioning back to snow during the early afternoon hours of Sunday. Additional light snow accumulations occurred Sunday and Sunday night. Total snowfall ranged from 9 inches in Tippecanoe County to around 4 inches across much of the I-74 corridor. Amounts then decreased further to the southwest.

Site	January 2021 Precipitation	January 2021 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	2.39	-0.27	0.77 on 1	8 days 6-13
Lafayette	1.83	-0.03	0.66 on 1	6 days 5-10
Muncie	1.51	-0.72	0.70 on 1	9 days 6-14
Terre Haute	2.29	-0.07	0.71 on 1	10 days 4-13
Bloomington	2.55	-0.76	0.73 on 1	10 days 4-13
Shelbyville	2.55	+0.16	1.03 on 1	9 days 6-14
Indy – Eagle Crk.	1.78	-0.43	0.72 on 1	5 days 6-10 and 19-23

January 2021 was tied for the 76th driest 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 44 mph out of the west on the 20th. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 18 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on the 1st and 16th. Freezing rain or drizzle was recorded on 4 days, and ice pellets on 2 days. No thunder was reported during the month.

February 2021 Outlook

The official outlook for February 2021 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance for below normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 32.1 degrees. There is also a greater chance for above 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.