

Central Indiana

March 2018

Climate Summary

56th Coolest on record at Indianapolis

Tied for 52nd Wettest on record at Indianapolis

6th Snowiest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

A persistent upper level trough focused over the eastern part of the country kept much of March cooler than normal across central Indiana and the Ohio Valley. March 2018 ended up as the coolest March since 2014. Winter remained very much in control throughout the month.

Highs throughout the month were often in the 40s with just 30s mixed in occasionally. Temperatures in the 50s were common during the first few days of the month, then other than a couple of days mid-month, the 50s didn't return until the last week of March. Much of central Indiana did not get any warmer than the lower 60s throughout the entire month. The warmest high of 60° at Indianapolis on the 19th was the coolest max temperature in March since 1970 when the warmest high only peaked at 58°. Northern portions of central Indiana, including Lafayette and Muncie, were unable to get any warmer than the 50s all month.

Lows throughout March were commonly below freezing until the last week of the month. Indianapolis only had three nights remain above freezing through the 26th. The 23 days with low temperatures at or below 32° in Indianapolis was the most in March since 2014. The average temperatures in March ended up being only 1-2° warmer than February.

Site	March 2018 Avg Temp	March 2018 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	38.9	-3.3	60 on 19	19 on 14
Lafayette	36.4	-4.4	55 on 19	18 on 9 and 14
Muncie	37.9	-1.7	56 on 27 and 31	22 on 10 and 16
Terre Haute	39.7	-3.1	62 on 19	21 on 14
Bloomington	40.4	-2.5	63 on 19	20 on 14
Shelbyville	39.4	-2.4	62 on 19	23 on 14 and 18
Indy – Eagle Crk.	39.1	-3.3	60 on 19	21 on 14

At Indianapolis, there were 11 days with above normal average temperatures and 20 days with below normal average temperatures.

March 2018 was the 56th coolest March in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation

Monthly melted precipitation totals ranged from 1.5 inches in northern Indiana to over 7 inches in central and south central Indiana. Monthly precipitation was near normal in northern Indiana and above normal in central and southern Indiana. Much of northern Indiana's precipitation occurred before the 17th, while most of central and southern Indiana's precipitation fell from the 16th through the end of March.

Monthly snowfall totals for March measured from less than an inch to over 17 inches in southeast Indiana. Heavy snow of more than 6 inches fell on the 11th, 20th-21st and 24th in portions of central and southern Indiana. Monthly snowfall ranged from near normal to near record levels for March in portions of southeast Indiana.

Rainfall of 1 to 4 inches from late on the 26th through early on the 30th caused the return of widespread flooding to central and southern Indiana. This high water continued into April. Melted precipitation totaled 2 to over 7 inches from the 16th through the 31st in central and southern Indiana.

Site	March 2018 Precipitation	March 2018 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	4.07	+0.51	1.27 on 29	3 days 2-4 and 9-11

Lafayette	3.05	+0.38	1.06 on 27	6 days 18-23
Muncie	3.83	+0.88	1.10 on 29	4 days 22-25
Terre Haute	4.97	+1.60	1.36 on 27	4 days 9-12
Bloomington	5.28	+1.40	1.55 on 29	4 days 9-12
Shelbyville	3.73	+0.30	1.45 on 29	3 days 2-4 and 9-11
Indy–Eagle Crk.	3.40	+0.10	1.08 on 29	3 days 2-4 and 9-11

March 2018 was tied for the 52nd wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Snowfall

Central Indiana experienced light snow at times through the first half of March, but the much greater impacts from snow came late month. Late season accumulating snow impacted central Indiana on the 21st and again more significantly on the 24th. Heavy, wet snow developed across mainly the southeast half of central Indiana on the 21st as low pressure passed through the Ohio Valley. Locations south and east of a Bloomington to Muncie line received at least 4 inches of snow with locally higher amounts approaching 6 inches.

Just a few days later on the 24th, snow developed across portions of central Indiana ahead of an approaching area of low pressure. A narrow band of intense snow produced amounts of 8-12 inches along the Interstate 74 corridor, including the Indianapolis metro area. Snowfall rates of 2 inches or greater per hour occurred within this band. The 10.2 inches of snow at Indianapolis set the daily snowfall record and became the second highest one day total for the month of March. The 11.6 inches of snow recorded for the month at Indianapolis became the 6th snowiest March on record for the city.

Severe Weather

No severe weather occurred across central Indiana in March.

For information on severe weather in other areas during March, 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 45 mph from the northwest on the 1st. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 13 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on 4 days. No thunder occurred in March at Indianapolis.

April 2018 Outlook

The official outlook for April 2018 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance of below normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 53.0 degrees. The outlook also calls for much greater chance of above normal precipitation. The average precipitation for April at Indianapolis is 3.81", with 0.2" of snowfall.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.