

Central Indiana

March 2019

Climate Summary

Tied for 49th Coolest on record at Indianapolis

33rd Wettest on record at Indianapolis

Tied for 67th Snowiest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

March started off cold and as a large area of Arctic air overspread the region on the 3rd, got even colder with highs remaining only in the teens on the 4th and 5th, a solid 30° below normal. In Indianapolis, it was the first time with a sub-20° high temperature in March since 2014 and the two days tied for the most sub-20° days in March since 1980. Lows fell into the single digits for most on the 4th through the 6th and at Indianapolis, the three days with lows below 10° were the most in the month of March since 1996. Indianapolis fell to 2° on the morning of the 4th, tying the record low from 1873 and marking the coldest March morning since March 6, 2015.

Temperatures slowly recovered over the following few days, eventually rising back to above normal levels by the 9th and 10th as highs warmed into the 50s. The warmest weather of the month for most came on the 13th and 14th as much warmer air spread across the Ohio Valley ahead of a strong storm system. Highs rose into the lower 70s both days across central Indiana. Behind the storm system, temperatures settled into a generally cooler than normal regime over the next 10-12 days with highs primarily in the 40s and lower 50s through the 26th. Temperatures again rose over the last few days of the month, highlighted by many locations nearing or reaching 70° on the 28th. As a cold front slowly sagged south through the area on the 29th and especially the 30th, much colder air returned for the end of the month. Highs remained in the 30s across much of central Indiana on the 31st with scattered clouds and a thin snow cover for some. The

month ended with much of the area experiencing average temperatures 3 to 5° below normal.

Site	March 2019 Avg Temp	March 2019 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	38.2	-4.0	71 on 13 and 14	2 on 4
Lafayette	35.8	-5.0	72 on 14	-2 on 4
Muncie	38.7	-0.9	72 on 13 and 14	5 on 4
Terre Haute	38.7	-4.1	73 on 14	3 on 4
Bloomington	38.8	-4.1	72 on 14	3 on 4
Shelbyville	38.5	-3.3	71 on 13 and 28	5 on 4
Indy – Eagle Crk.	38.3	-4.1	72 on 14	2 on 4

At Indianapolis, there were 6 days with above normal average temperatures, 24 days with below normal average temperatures and 1 day with normal average temperatures.

March 2019 was tied for the 49th coolest March in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Precipitation

Overall, Indiana ended the month with near normal to above normal rainfall across the entire state. Central portions of the state received around 1 to 2 inches above normal, with northern and southeastern portions of the state mainly around half an inch to 2 inches above normal. Southwestern portions of the state saw the most rain with 2 to over 3 inches above normal rainfall.

Site	March 2018 Precipitation	March 2018 Difference from Normal	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
Indianapolis	5.02	+1.46	1.84 on 9	2 days 11-12, 18-19, 22-23 and 26-27
Lafayette	4.31	+1.64	1.42 on 30	3 days 25-27
Muncie	3.75	+0.80	1.07 on 9	2 days 1-2, 11-12, 22-23 and 26-27
Terre Haute	4.51	+1.14	1.48 on 9	5 days 15-19

Bloomington	4.80	+0.92	1.35 on 9	4 days 16-19
Shelbyville	3.81	+0.38	1.12 on 9	3 days 10-12
Indy–Eagle Crk.	4.43	+1.13	1.52 on 9	2 days 1-2, 11-12, 18-19, 22-23 and 26-27

March 2019 was the 33rd wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Snowfall

Snowfall amounts across Indiana varied between 2 and 5 inches across central Indiana with the heaviest amounts along a corridor between northern Hendricks county and Delaware County. The official snowfall total was 2.3 inches for Indianapolis which was around .3 inches below normal. One interesting note is the difference between the north and south parts of Marion County with reports as high as 4.6 inches in the northern portions of the county and around 2 in the southern portions. The majority of the snow fell over the course of three events: March 3rd, 17th, and the 30th.

Severe Weather

A line of storms tracking across the state during the evening of the 9th produced gusty winds in spots. A small microburst with straight line winds caused damage to three homes in Eaton in northeast Delaware County as the line passed. Peak winds were estimated at 90 mph, causing roof and structural damage to the homes.

The main severe weather event during March occurred in the late morning and afternoon of the 14th as a potent low pressure system tracked across the area. Lines of thunderstorms broke out during the late morning over the lower Wabash Valley and lifted northeast through the afternoon. Storms produced wind damage and large hail in a few locations across south central Indiana with an EF1 tornado tracking just over a mile in Jackson County north of Brownstown. Following the storms, a period of intense wind gusts impacted much of the northern half of central Indiana through the evening with gusts up to 60 mph in spots.

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 60 mph from the southwest in the early evening of the 14th as intense wind gusts developed behind a strong cold front. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 17 days during the month, with thunder occurring on four days during the month. Freezing rain and/or drizzle was reported on the 8th and ice pellets occurred on the 30th.

April 2019 Outlook

The official outlook for April 2019 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates a greater chance of above normal temperatures across central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 53.0 degrees. The outlook also calls for an equal chance of near, above or below normal precipitation. The average precipitation for April at Indianapolis is 3.81", with 0.2" of snowfall.

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.