

Central Indiana

May 2019

Climate Summary

Tied for 53rd Warmest on record at Indianapolis

62nd Wettest on record at Indianapolis

Temperatures

Much of the first half of May saw temperatures fluctuate up and down as the region struggled to maintain an extended period of warmth. Highs in the low to mid 70s the first couple of days quickly dropped back into the 50s and low 60s for the 3rd and 4th as cool, damp conditions impacted the Ohio Valley. Temperatures would surge into the 70s for much of the area from the 5th through the 9th, with some locations warming into the lower 80s on the 8th. This stretch of warmer weather happened to coincide with the driest period of the month for much of central Indiana.

The passage of a cold front ushered in much cooler and unsettled conditions once again beginning on the 10th and lasting for several days. High temperatures struggled to climb out of the 50s on a few of the days and on the coolest day, a damp and raw Mother's Day on the 12th, some portions of central Indiana could not even rise out of the 40s. Indianapolis could only reach 49° officially on the 12th, only the third May day where the high failed to make it to 50° since 2006. May 12, 2006 and May 4, 2017 were the other dates. The chilliest mornings took place during this stretch of unusually cool weather, with both the morning of the 11th and 14th seeing temperatures bottom out in the mid and upper 30s in some locations.

Beginning on the 15th, daytime temperatures would fail to reach 70° on just two days, the 20th and 21st, as a frontal boundary shifted briefly south of the region. This front would be a focus for multiple rounds of showers and thunderstorms through much of the rest of the month and central Indiana would often be found to the south of the front in a warmer and much more humid airmass. Low and mid 80s were common across much of the region every day from the 23rd through the end of the month with lows in the 60s and even a few overnights remaining in the 70s for the first time in 2019.

Site	May 2019 Avg Temp	May 2019 Difference from Normal	Highest Temperature	Lowest Temperature
Indianapolis	64.2	+1.5	87 on 24	40 on 11
Lafayette	61.8	-0.1	86 on 18	36 on 14
Muncie	64.8	+3.0	89 on 18 and 25	39 on 11
Terre Haute	64.9	+1.9	88 on 24	38 on 11
Bloomington	65.2	+2.6	88 on 24 and 28	39 on 14
Shelbyville	65.8	+2.9	89 on 24 and 28	39 on 14
Indy – Eagle Crk.	63.9	+1.1	87 on 24	40 on 11 and 14

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

May 2019 was tied for the 53rd warmest in the Indianapolis area since 1871.

Precipitation

May was an active month, with Indiana staying in the storm track for much of the month. Frequent rounds of rain kept the ground saturated through the month, and crop reports for the state shows that just 22 percent of Indiana's corn acreage was planted by May 26. That's far behind the five-year average of 85 percent of Indiana's corn crop planted by that date. Only 11 percent of Indiana's soybeans are in the ground, putting that crop well behind the five-year average of 63 percent.

More days had rain than not across much of the state with the average of central Indiana ASOS sites having rain reported on around 19 days. Precipitation amounts were generally low with each rain event with all but a few events being less than an inch. The northern and southern portions of the state ended the month with above average precipitation. Despite the number of days with rainfall, the central portions of the state ended near to slightly below normal. Rainfall amounts varied between 3 to 5 inches in much of central Indiana to between 5 to as high as 8 inches across the southern and northwestern portions of the state. Another bullseye of higher precipitation values was seen in east central Indiana with 6 to 8 inches of rain.

Site	May 2019 Precipitation	May 2019 Difference from	Wettest Day	Longest Dry Stretch
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		Normal		
Indianapolis	4.16	-0.89	0.67 on 16	4 days 5-8
Lafayette	5.85	+1.66	1.12 on 30	2 days 5-6, 14-15 and 17-18
Muncie	4.89	+0.48	0.67 on 26	2 days 5-6 and 14-15
Terre Haute	4.55	-2.08	1.52 on 22	4 days 5-8
Bloomington	4.07	-1.17	0.62 on 22	4 days 5-8
Shelbyville	4.46	-0.82	0.82 on 29	4 days 5-8
Indy – Eagle Crk.	3.76	-1.51	0.52 on 16	4 days 5-8

May 2019 was the 62nd wettest in the Indianapolis area since weather records began in 1871.

Severe Weather

After a quiet start to May, the second half of the month became much more active with severe weather and flooding as a frontal boundary meandered across central Indiana. An intense line of thunderstorms surged south across central Indiana during the afternoon and evening of the 16th, producing wind damage and gusts to 70 mph across the northern Indianapolis metro area. A separate intense supercell tracked southeast out of central Illinois and into the Wabash Valley, producing up to baseball size hail and multiple funnel clouds and wall clouds over Vermillion County.

After a few days of quiet weather, the nearly stationary boundary set up across the region with periods of storms and bouts with severe weather every couple of days from the 19th through the end of the month. Severe thunderstorm clusters on the 23rd and 26th both produced wind damage across parts of the area in the early morning hours prior to daybreak.

The afternoon and evening of the 27th saw thunderstorms erupt along a warm front draped across northern portions of central Indiana. Storms produced wind damage and in Tippecanoe County, large hail up to 4 inches in diameter! The most extensive damage occurred from a cluster of storms that would produce three tornadoes over Madison and Henry Counties during the evening. Damage was rated up to EF2 with peak winds at 130 mph in Pendleton and Huntsville where numerous large trees were uprooted and multiple structures were severely damaged. Both tornadoes in Henry County were rated at EF1.

For more detailed information on these events from May, click on the links below:

May 16: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/may162019severe>

May 19: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/may192019severe>

May 23: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/may232019severe>
May 26: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/may262019severe>
May 27: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/may272019tornadoes>

For information on severe weather in other areas during May, 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 on the 23rd as thunderstorms moved through the Indianapolis metro area. Fog or haze was reported at Indianapolis on 20 days during the month, with dense fog occurring on the 1st and 2nd. Thunder was reported on 9 days during the month.

June 2019 Outlook

The official outlook for June 2019 from the Climate Prediction Center indicates an equal chance for near, above or below normal temperatures and precipitation for central Indiana. At Indianapolis, the average temperature for the month is 72.0 degrees. The average precipitation for June at Indianapolis is 4.25".

Data prepared by the Indianapolis Forecast Office.