Severe to extreme drought conditions continued across much of north central Illinois during January 2006. However, many locations received near normal or above normal precipitation for the month. Chicago Ohare Airport received 2.78 inches, which was 1.03 inches above normal. Rockford Airport received 2.97 inches, which was 1.56 inches above normal.

A winter storm moved across Northern Illinois during the afternoon and evening hours on Friday, January 20th and the early morning hours of Saturday, January 21st. Snow began to fall during the afternoon hours and continued through evening hours and was heavy at times. A band of very heavy snow fell across Kane County, southeast McHenry County, northwest Cook county and most of Lake County. Snowfall amounts in this band ranged from 10 to 12 inches. Outside of this heavy band, snowfall amounts ranged from 6 to 9 inches, but snowfall amounts tapered off quickly across south central DuPage and south central Cook counties, with those areas receiving 3 to 5 inches of snow. Some of the largest snowfall amounts included 12.0 inches in Elgin in Kane County; 11.7 inches in Grayslake in Lake County; 11.5 inches in Shabbona in DeKalb County; 11.0 inches Barrington in Cook County; 9.0 inches in Paw Paw in Lee County; 8.0 inches in Belvidere in Boone County; 6.7 inches in Spring Grove in McHenry County and 6.5 inches in Mendota in Lasalle County. Chicago Ohare Airport measured 4.7 inches and Rockford Airport measured 5.0 inches.