

IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY

September 2002

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 65.5° or 2.1° above normal while precipitation totaled 1.73 inches or 2.10 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 33rd warmest and 18th driest September among 130 years of state records. This was the driest and second warmest September since 1990 (1998 was warmer).

Temperatures. September began very warm with above normal temperatures on each of the first 10 days of the month. The month's highest temperatures were 96° readings reported at Hawarden, Lamoni, Mapleton, Onawa, Rock Rapids and Shenandoah on the 6th and at Hawarden and Johnston on the 7th. The mid portion of the month was characterized by more seasonal temperatures with no prolonged spells of unusually hot or cold weather. The coldest weather was recorded on the morning of the 24th when the first freeze of the season was reported from locations scattered across the northern two-thirds of the state. Sheldon reported the lowest temperature on that date with a 28° reading. Summerlike heat returned late in the month with Glenwood reaching 93° on the 29th while Ames reached 92° on the 30th.

Cooling Degree Days. Home air conditioning requirements, as estimated by cooling degree days totals, averaged 257% greater than last September and 74% greater than normal. Air conditioning requirements for the year are running 15% greater than last year and 16% greater than normal. This has been the hottest air conditioning season since 1991.

Precipitation. Dry weather was the rule across most of Iowa during September. Only a few widely scattered central Iowa locations managed to record normal rainfall. Thunderstorms on the 18th-19th accounted for more than half of the monthly precipitation total with Popejoy reporting 4.55 inches during that time. Monthly precipitation totals varied from only 0.33 inch at Lake Rathbun (their driest September since 1979) up to 5.28 inches at Popejoy.

Severe Weather. Large hail and /or high winds were reported from 18 Iowa counties on the 18th. Greatest damage was associated with hail up to baseball size in and near Maquoketa on the afternoon of the 18th.