

## IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – JANUARY 2005

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 18.7° or 0.9° above normal while precipitation totaled 1.40 inches or 0.45 inches above normal. This ranks as the 64<sup>th</sup> coolest and 33<sup>rd</sup> wettest January among 133 years of state weather records.

Temperatures. Temperatures fluctuated from above to below normal about every four days for the first two-thirds of the month until warmer than normal weather finally persisted for the last eight days of January. The coldest weather came at mid month. The daytime high reached only -6° at Mason City on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Temperatures fell to -20° at Rock Rapids, Charles City, Spencer and Sibley on the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>, at Rock Rapids on the 16<sup>th</sup> and again at Charles City and Waterloo on the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup>. The month's warmest weather arrived on the 25<sup>th</sup> when readings climbed into the 50's across much of the southwest one-half of Iowa and even reached 62° at Keosauqua.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 3% less than last year and 2% less than normal. Thus far this season (since July 1) degree day totals are running 4% less than last season and 10% less than normal.

Precipitation. January began with an extremely wet weather pattern. Rain and freezing rain fell statewide on New Year's Day into the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Considerable ice accumulated over the northwest one-third of the state with amounts to 0.62 inches at Mason City. Rain fell nearly statewide again from late on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to midday on the 3<sup>rd</sup> with light freezing rain across the northwestern two-thirds of Iowa. Yet another storm system moved into the state late on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. This began as freezing rain in most areas before changing over to snow during the daytime and evening hours of the 4<sup>th</sup>. Heavy snow, accumulating from 10 to 15 inches, fell from Omaha-Council Bluffs northeastward through Waterloo and into Wisconsin. The ISU Agronomy Farm between Ames and Boone reported the most snow during this storm with 15.5 inches. 78% of the month's precipitation fell during these first 6 days of January. Light freezing rain was again common across eastern Iowa on the nights of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Locally heavy rain fell across southeastern Iowa on the 12<sup>th</sup> with 1.52 inches at West Branch. There was even a report of nickel sized hail from Davis County on the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup>. This was the first report of large hail in Iowa during January since the major tornado outbreak of January 24, 1967. Heavy snow, accompanied by strong winds, fell across the northeast one-third of Iowa on the night of the 21<sup>st</sup> with 10.2 inches reported at Waukon. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 0.29 inches at Spencer to 3.36 inches at Lowden and Maquoketa. Snowfall for the month averaged 10.0 inches or 1.8 inches more than normal. This ranks as the 24<sup>th</sup> snowiest January among 118 years of records. 8.5 inches of this total came in the storm of the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. This was Iowa's largest storm total snow event since an average of 9.0 inches of snow fell January 11-13, 1979.

Harry J. Hillaker, State Climatologist  
Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship  
Wallace State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Phone: (515) 281-8981  
E-Mail: Harry.Hillaker@idals.state.ia.us