

IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – MAY 2005

General Summary. May temperatures averaged 57.9° or 2.3° below normal while precipitation totaled 3.92 inches or 0.31 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 37th coolest and 65th wettest May among 133 years of state records.

Temperatures. May began very un-springlike with exceptionally cold weather. Afternoon highs were only in the 40's over nearly all of Iowa on the 1st and reached only 38° at Waukon on the afternoon of the 2nd. Temperatures plunged to 19° at Elkader, Grinnell, Lowden and Manchester on the morning of the 3rd with all but 4 of 140 reporting points in the state recording a freeze on the 3rd and/or 4th (Bloomfield, Keokuk, Lamoni and Shenandoah dropped to just 33°). These 19° readings were the lowest May temperatures in Iowa since May 1, 1967 and the lowest for so late in the spring since May 4, 1907. At several locations these were the lowest May temperatures on record including:

City	New May Record	Old May Record	Period of Record
Clinton	24° on May 3	26° May 4, 1907	110 years
Columbus Jct.	25° on May 3	26° May 2, 1908	105 years
Dubuque	21° on May 3	24° May 10, 1966	130 years
Elkader	19° on May 3	21° May 4, 1907	110 years
Grinnell	19° on May 3	22° May 4, 1907	113 years
Independence	20° on May 3	21° May 4, 1907	110 years
Mason City	22° on May 3	23° May 9, 1945	110 years
Ottumwa	24° on May 3	25° May 4, 1907	110 years
Washington	23° on May 3	24° May 4, 1907	113 years

Warmer than normal weather prevailed from the 5th through the 11th with Glenwood reaching 94° on the afternoon of the 10th. However, 14 of the last 20 days of the month were cooler than normal. The final freeze of the month was recorded at several northeast Iowa locations on the morning of the 16th while Shenandoah and Bedford did manage to reach 90° on the 19th.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 11% more than normal and 28% more than last May. Degree day totals for the heating season (since July 1, 2004) are running 5% less than last season and 10% less than normal.

Precipitation. The first several days of May were dry, however, very heavy rains affected a small area of northwest and north central Iowa on the night of the 6th. At Estherville 4.71 inches of rain was reported unofficially between 6 and 9 p.m. with a storm total of 5.39 inches. The month's most widespread rainfall occurred from late on the 10th until early on the 13th when an average of 2.43 inches of rain fell across the state. Nearly all of Iowa recorded at least an inch of rain during this 60 hour period with Adair reporting the most with 6.70 inches. Rain fell frequently during the last half of the

month but amounts were on the light side with a state average of only 0.88 inches after the 14th. As was the case in April, precipitation was generally well below normal in eastern Iowa and near to above normal elsewhere. Monthly totals varied from 1.46 inches at Washington, their driest May since 1992, to 9.34 inches at Estherville, their highest May total since 1960.

Severe Weather. May, typically the most active month of the year for severe weather along with June, was rather quiet this year. The only widespread severe weather outbreak came on the 10th when severe weather was reported from 24 counties with the most significant damage coming from large hail in Audubon and Guthrie Counties.

Spring Summary. Spring temperatures averaged 48.9° or 0.7° above normal while precipitation totaled 8.51 inches or 1.26 inches below normal. This ranks as the 49th warmest and 60th driest spring among 133 years of state records.

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