

## IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 2008

General Summary. February temperatures averaged 16.5° or 7.7° below normal while precipitation averaged 1.79 inches or 0.81 inches above normal. This ranks as the 17<sup>th</sup> coldest and 13<sup>th</sup> wettest February among 136 years of state records.

Temperatures. February began with above normal temperatures for the first 5 days of the month with readings climbing into the 40's across southern Iowa with Keokuk warming to 53° on the 4<sup>th</sup>. However, colder than normal weather was the rule for all but five (8<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>) of the remaining days of the month. Temperatures averaged more than 20 degrees below normal on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Sibley reported a low temperature of -15° on the 10<sup>th</sup> while Mason City recorded a wind chill of -39°. Actual temperatures fell to -23° at Sanborn on the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> while wind chill readings plunged to -45° at Spencer and Estherville (-69° on the old wind chill chart in use prior to 2001). This was Iowa's lowest wind chill since January 10, 1997.

Heating Degree Days Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 22% greater than normal and 1% more than last February. Thus far this heating season (since July 1, 2007) degree day totals are running 5% greater than one year ago and 2% greater than normal.

Precipitation. The most noteworthy aspect of February's weather was heavy snowfall. Measurable snow fell somewhere in the state on all but 8 days of the month. The first of the larger events came on the 3<sup>rd</sup> when snow fell across the southeast one-half of Iowa with 7 to 12 inches falling from south central into east central Iowa. Just a few days later snow fell over the southeast three-fourths of the state with 7 to 16 inches accumulating along a Creston to Dubuque line. Snow fell over all but far southwest Iowa on the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> with 3 to 6 inches across northern Iowa. On the 14<sup>th</sup> snow fell across the northeast one-quarter of Iowa with 8 inches at Decorah. Finally, the southeast two-thirds of the state endured blizzard conditions on the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> with 3 to 6 inches of wind driven snow along a Creston to Decorah line. Monthly snowfall totals reached 41.7 inches at Oskaloosa and 40.3 inches at Lowden. These totals were just shy of the state record monthly snowfall of 44.0 inches set at Red Oak in January 1936. At Maquoketa a total of 34.6 inches of snow fell in February. This not only easily set a record for snowiest month at that location but pushed their seasonal snowfall total to a record 67.6 inches (old record of 58.2 in 1974-1975). Snowfall totals were below normal in parts of western Iowa (only 3.1 inches at Logan), resulting in a statewide average snowfall of 15.8 inches for the month, 9.5 inches above normal. This ties as the third snowiest February in Iowa and 13<sup>th</sup> snowiest calendar month among 121 years of records. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 0.22 inches at Atlantic to 4.61 inches at Lowden.

Winter Summary. Temperatures during the three mid-winter months averaged 17.7° or 3.8° below normal while precipitation totaled 5.06 inches or 1.89 inches above normal. This ranks as the 21<sup>st</sup> coldest and 8<sup>th</sup> wettest winter among 135 years of state records. The last colder and snowier winter was that of 2000-2001.

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