

IOWA PRELIMINARY MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – NOVEMBER 2011

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 39.7° or 3.1° above normal while precipitation totaled 2.11 inches or 0.06 inch above normal. This ranks as the 35th warmest and 38th wettest November among 139 years of records. This was the eighth consecutive warmer than normal November but the first wetter than normal one since 2004.

Temperatures. Warmer than usual weather was the rule for most of the month as below normal temperatures were confined to only six days of November. The warmest day came on the first when temperatures pushed well into the 70s over southeastern Iowa with Keokuk reaching 77°. Highs in the seventies were attained on only two more dates with Keokuk reaching 72° on the 13th and Logan 71° on the 24th. Meanwhile single digit minimum temperatures were reported on four days with lowest readings being 9° at Sibley on the 16th, 2° at Sheldon on the 17th, 1° at Sibley on the 20th and 6° at Battle Creek on the 28th.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 7% less than last November and 12% less than normal. Degree day totals so far this heating season (since July 1) are running 3% more than one year ago but 11% less than normal.

Precipitation. Much needed precipitation arrived thanks to three large storm systems during November. Two of the largest rain events since June brought a statewide average precipitation amount of 0.76 inch on the 2nd-3rd and 1.09 inches from the 7th to the 9th. A third event on the 25th-26th brought most of the rest of the month's precipitation with an average of 0.21 inch. Unfortunately little to no precipitation fell across northwestern Iowa with these storms. As a result about the northwest one-third of the state is rated as being in severe drought at month's end while parts of eastern Iowa are now classified as being drought-free. Rain totals varied from 0.03 inch at Sioux Center, their fourth driest November among 105 years of records, to 6.23 inches at Keokuk, their third wettest November among 140 years of data. The statewide average precipitation since July 1 has been 10.90 inches or 5.83 inches less than normal. This ranks as the driest July to November period since 1976. The season's first accumulating snow fell over a small portion of west central Iowa on the 2nd with a location near Persia in Harrison County reporting 3 inches. The month's largest snow event came a week later on the 9th when two to four inches of snow fell along a Bedford-Des Moines-New Hampton line with locally higher amounts reported in south central Iowa where Winterset reported 6.5 inches. However, the statewide average snowfall for the month was only 0.8 inch or 1.9 inches less than normal. This was the 30th lowest November snow total among 125 years of record.

Fall Summary. Temperatures for the three fall months of September, October and November averaged 51.4° or 1.2° above normal while precipitation totaled 4.51 inches or 3.52 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 53rd warmest and 14th driest Autumn among 139 years of record. This was the fifth consecutive warmer than normal fall and the driest one since 1999. Autumn snow is usually sporadic and short-lived. However with an average of 0.8 inch (normal of 3.0 inches) in 2011 this was the ninth consecutive autumn with less than normal snowfall.

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