



IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – MAY 2014

General Summary. Temperatures averaged 60.1°, right at normal, while precipitation totaled 3.14 inches or 1.42 inches below normal. This ranks as the 66th warmest and 40th driest May among 142 years of records.

Temperatures. May began with five consecutive cooler than normal days and ended with nine consecutive warmer than normal ones. In between there was plenty of variety. A light freeze was recorded in a few scattered areas on the 2nd and 3rd. A brief, but very strong, warm-up prevailed on the 7th and 8th. Particularly noteworthy were temperatures soaring into the mid 90's in southwest Iowa on the afternoon of the 7th. Clarinda, Shenandoah and Sidney reached 97°, the highest temperatures recorded so early in the year in Iowa since Logan reached 99° on April 18, 1994. However, temperatures were far below normal from 14th to the 17th with freezes recorded somewhere in the state each day in the period. The coldest morning over most of western and central Iowa came on the 16th with a hard freeze occurring over much of northwest Iowa where Spencer Airport recorded a low of 24°. A lower temperature has not occurred so late in the season in Iowa since Sanborn reached 22° on May 22, 1963. There were reports of freeze-damaged soybeans needing to be replanted as far south as the Missouri border. Parts of eastern Iowa recorded their lowest temperatures of the month on the morning of the 17th with Stanley (Buchanan Co.) recording a low of 28°. Temperatures were frequently in the eighties after the 18th, but the highest late-month readings only reached the 90° mark on the 31st at Davenport, Iowa City, Lowden and Sioux Center.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 8% less than last May but were 9% greater than normal. Degree day totals for the 2013-2014 season totaled 11% greater than last season and 14% greater than normal to make this the coldest heating season in 35 years.

Precipitation. Rain was relatively frequent during May but amounts fell short of normal over most of Iowa. A little more than one-half of the monthly rain total came on the 11th-12th when rain fell statewide and two to three inch totals were common over west central and southwest Iowa (maximum reported amount of 4.08 inches near Osceola). Rain was also widespread on the 25th-27th but large totals were confined to a small portion of west central Iowa where Holly Springs (Woodbury County) reported 4.72 inches. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 0.72 inches at Keosauqua to 8.33 inches near Castana. Unusually dry conditions prevailed across the northwest and southeast corners of Iowa during May. At Keosauqua this was their driest May among 127 years of record (old May record 1.00 in 1934). At Sibley in northwest Iowa this was the driest May since 1963 while at Rock Rapids this has been the driest year-to-date since 1963. The dry weather, along with late month warmth, allowed crop planting to progress ahead of the normal pace by June 1 after a very slow start to the season.

Severe Weather. There were numerous episodes of severe weather during May, but overall activity was a little less widespread than is typical for May. The largest severe weather event came on the afternoon and evening of the 11th when severe storms were reported from 25 counties, mostly in southern Iowa, with a total of eight tornadoes. The most damaging storm was an EF-2 tornado striking Lake Panorama in Guthrie County shortly after sunset.

Spring Summary. The three spring months of March, April and May averaged 45.5° or 2.8° below normal while precipitation totaled 8.80 inches or 1.42 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 32nd coolest and 68th driest spring among 142 years of record. This season was uneventful compared to the two previous springs with 2012 setting a record for warmest spring and 2013 being the wettest on record.

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May 2014

WEATHER BY DISTRICTS

DISTRICT	TEMPERATURE (F)		HEATING DEGREE DAYS				PRECIPITATION (inches)				SNOWFALL May 2014 Average
	May 2014 Average	Departure*	May 2014 Average	Departure*	Since Jul., 1, 2013 Average	Departure*	May 2014 Average	Departure*	Since Jan.1, 2014 Average	Departure*	
Northwest	58.8	-0.3	249	+25	8305	+779	1.70	-2.02	5.86	-4.27	T
North Central	57.9	-0.7	261	+28	8580	+962	3.07	-1.40	12.51	+0.81	T
Northeast	58.4	-0.4	246	+19	8565	+1256	2.57	-1.82	13.00	+0.82	T
West Central	60.1	-0.1	216	+22	7710	+726	4.49	0.00	9.53	-2.10	0.0
Central	60.0	0.0	209	+11	7857	+917	3.28	-1.41	12.07	-0.36	T
East Central	61.1	+0.4	192	+10	7788	+1181	2.98	-1.36	11.86	-0.63	0.0
Southwest	62.0	+0.6	186	+22	7168	+801	4.08	-1.14	9.18	-3.58	0.0
South Central	61.2	+0.6	192	+11	7265	+859	4.07	-1.05	12.54	-0.65	T
Southeast	62.6	+0.6	167	+15	7157	+1091	2.05	-2.84	11.20	-2.67	0.0
STATE	60.1	0.0	215	+18	7859	+948	3.14	-1.42	10.82	-1.37	T

* Departures are computed from 1981-2010 normals.

The weather data in this report are based upon information collected by the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA National Weather Service.

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
COUNTY PRECIPITATION ESTIMATES, MAY 2014 (inches)

