



## IOWA MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 2017

**General Summary.** Temperatures averaged 33.8° or 9.8° above normal while precipitation averaged 1.01 inches or just 0.04 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest and 72<sup>nd</sup> wettest February among 145 years of records. Only 1954 and 1998 brought a warmer February than this year.

**Temperatures.** Temperatures averaged near seasonal norms for the first nine days of the month. However, warmer than normal weather prevailed for all but one (25<sup>th</sup>) of the remaining days of February with an exceptionally mild period from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> when temperatures averaged 23.7° above normal. A look at the Iowa record books back to 1891 found 62 February dates when temperatures reached 70 degrees or higher somewhere in the state. Prior to this year no single February brought more than four days of 70 degree weather (1930, 1981 and 1996) with the longest streak of 70° weather being three consecutive days in 1996 (24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>). However, this February brought eight days of 70° weather with seven of those coming consecutively from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> with one more on the last day of the month. Ottumwa recorded the highest temperature of the month with a 79° reading on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. This reading has been exceeded only three times previously in February in Iowa (82° at Sidney on 2/29/1972 and 80° at Clarinda and Mount Ayr on 2/24/1930). Daily record high temperatures were recorded somewhere in the state every day from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup>, primarily across the southeast one-half of the state, with Ottumwa setting or tying daily records on each of these seven days. On the other extreme Little Sioux recorded the only subzero temperature of the month with a -3° reading on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Heating Degree Day Totals.** Home heating requirement, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 25% less than normal and 19% less than last February. Heating degree day totals thus far this winter season are running 17% less than normal and 5% less than last season through the end of February. A warmer heating season was last recorded in the winter of 2001-2002.

**Precipitation.** There were only two measureable snow events during the month. The first one on the 8<sup>th</sup> brought snow to about the southern two-thirds of the state with greatest amounts falling across west central and south central Iowa where Indianola picked up 6.1 inches. The second, and much more intense event, brought snow to all of the state on the 23<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. Heaviest snow fell across the northwest where 12.5 inches fell near West Bend and 12.0 inches at Algona. An inch or less of snow fell across east central Iowa and the southern one-quarter of the state. Wind gusts up to 48 mph brought blizzard conditions across about the northwest one-third of the state with this late month storm. Monthly snow totals varied from only 0.3 inches at Manchester to 13.6 inches at Little Sioux. A statewide average of 4.5 inches of snow fell during the month, 2.3 inches less than normal and the lowest February total since 2009. This ranks as the 43<sup>rd</sup> lowest February snow total among 130 years of records. There were also several rain events during the month with the largest coming on the 20<sup>th</sup> when rain fell statewide with totals of an inch or more falling over parts of north central and northeast Iowa. Monthly precipitation totals varied from only 0.20 inches at Allerton where this was the driest February since 1970 to 2.78 inches at Nashua or more than 2.5 times their normal amount for February.

**Severe Weather.** Thunderstorms developed across eastern Iowa during the late afternoon of the 28<sup>th</sup> and brought one brief tornado in Clinton County and large hail reports from eleven east central and southeast Iowa counties. Only two other February tornadoes have been recorded in Iowa (Feb. 1, 1922 at Monticello and Feb. 23, 1977 at Mason City). Thunderstorms were also fairly widespread on the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> but with only a few very isolated large hail occurrences on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Winter Summary.** Temperatures over the three mid-winters months averaged 26.8° or 4.7° above normal while precipitation totaled 4.17 inches or 0.83 inches above normal. This ranks as the 9<sup>th</sup> warmest and 31<sup>st</sup> wettest winter among 144 years of records. Six of the top ten warmest winters have come within the past 20 years.

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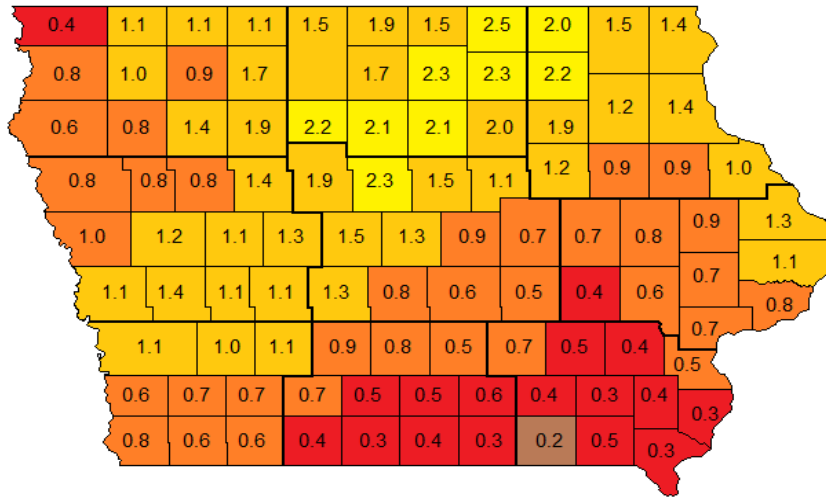
## WEATHER BY DISTRICTS

DISTRICT	TEMPERATURE (F)		HEATING DEGREE DAYS				PRECIPITATION (inches)				SNOWFALL Feb 2017 Average
	February 2017 Average	Departure*	February 2017 Average	Departure*	Since Jul., 1, 2016 Average	Departure*	February 2017 Average	Departure*	Since Jan. 1, 2017 Average	Departure*	
Northwest	30.9	+9.6	949	-274	4833	-933	0.97	+0.33	2.15	+0.84	7.6
North Central	29.9	+9.5	976	-272	4838	-992	2.03	+1.17	4.06	+2.37	8.1
Northeast	31.7	+9.9	928	-280	4617	-981	1.31	+0.21	3.74	+1.62	1.7
West Central	32.9	+9.0	893	-258	4542	-837	1.04	+0.22	2.11	+0.51	8.9
Central	34.1	+10.3	857	-298	4331	-1016	1.10	+0.08	3.00	+1.06	2.9
East Central	35.3	+10.1	825	-288	4201	-903	0.82	-0.52	2.39	-0.10	1.3
Southwest	36.4	+9.5	795	-271	4099	-832	0.78	-0.26	2.10	+0.25	3.1
South Central	37.2	+10.6	771	-304	4018	-920	0.44	-0.80	1.87	-0.26	3.1
Southeast	38.3	+10.4	742	-296	3823	-893	0.41	-1.15	1.97	-0.86	2.3
STATE	33.8	+9.8	866	-282	4394	-928	1.01	-0.04	2.62	+0.65	4.5

\* Departures are computed from 1981-2010 normals.

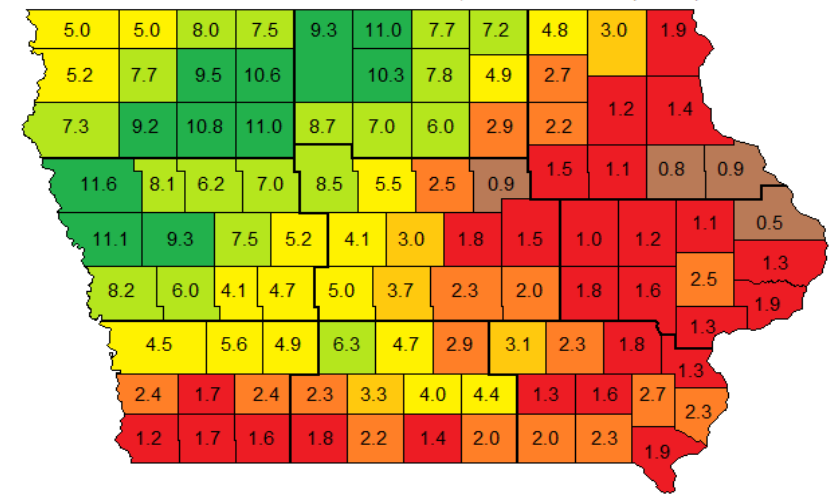
The weather data in this report are based upon information collected by the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA National Weather Service.

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship  
 COUNTY PRECIPITATION ESTIMATES, FEBRUARY 2017 (inches)



0.1 0.25 0.5 1.0 2.0 3.0 4.0 6.0 8.0 10.0 12.0

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship  
 COUNTY SNOWFALL ESTIMATES, FEBRUARY 2017 (inches)



0.5 1 2 3 4 6 9 12 15 20 25