

History of the Springfield Climatological Database

Weather observations began in Springfield on July 1, 1879, at the Springer building at 6th and Monroe Streets in downtown Springfield. This site was in use for less than a month, as the station was relocated to the Federal Building nearby, on July 28th. High and low temperature and precipitation were recorded from the roof of the buildings. An anemometer for recording wind speed was added at the new site.

On November 1, 1906, the Weather Bureau (as the NWS was known back then) moved the weather station relocated to the new Weather Bureau building at 7th and Monroe, one block east. Wind instruments remained on the roof, but the thermometers and rain gage were located at ground level.

The weather station moved again on November 1, 1928, to the Hotel Abraham Lincoln at 5th and Capitol. The thermometers and rain gage were again moved to the roof, 155 feet above ground level. Another move occurred November 1, 1930, as the station went back to the Federal Building.

On November 15, 1935, a Weather Bureau Airport Station (WBAS) was established at the new Southwest Airport (located in the vicinity of the current Westchester Blvd and Chatham Rd intersection). Initially, this station only recorded temperatures, as well as aviation observations. On November 4, 1937, rain gage equipment was installed, as the site was designated as a First Order station.

On November 1, 1947, airport operations were moved to the new Capital Airport, located 6.2 miles north northeast of the old airport. The Weather Bureau office was located in the terminal building, with the temperature equipment on the ground nearby, and the wind equipment on the roof. Equipment to measure sunshine amounts was added on December 8, 1956.

The Weather Bureau's City Office downtown was closed on April 30, 1954, and operations were transferred to the Capital Airport office.

On March 5, 1980, the station was relocated to the newly constructed Services Building, about 3/4 mile north of the old site. Operations continued at this site until December 1, 1995. It was at this time that the Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS), located near the control tower on the northwest side of the airport, was commissioned. Contract and tower personnel monitored the ASOS observations for accuracy.

A detailed history of the observation locations:

- **7/1/1879 to 7/28/1979:** Springer Building, 6th and Monroe
- **7/28/1879 to 11/1/1906:** Federal Building, 6th and Monroe (150 ft. south of old site)
- **11/1/1906 to 11/1/1928:** Weather Bureau Building, 7th and Monroe (225 ft. east)
- **11/1/1928 to 11/1/1930:** Hotel Abraham Lincoln, 5th and Capitol (875 ft. southwest)
- **11/1/1930 to 4/30/1954:** Federal Building, 7th and Monroe (800 ft. northeast) (consolidated with Capital Airport facility 4/30/1954)
- **11/15/1935 to 11/1/1947:** Southwest Airport (second Weather Bureau site)
- **11/1/1947 to 3/5/1980:** Capital Airport, terminal building (6.2 miles north northeast of Southwest Airport site)
- **3/5/1980 to 12/1/1995:** Capital Airport, Services Building (0.75 miles north)
- **12/1/1995 to present:** ASOS plot near control tower, on northwest side of grounds