

Illinois Weather Trivia for January

January 1

- 1876: A tornado briefly touched down in Springfield, tearing the roof off a factory and damaging several homes. The iron girders of a steel mill were reportedly bent in half by the F2 strength tornado.
- 1965: The new year started out very wet in Peoria. 4.43 inches of precipitation was received, making it the wettest January day on record in the city.
- 1999: A major winter storm paralyzed much of the region, during the first few days of 1999. Snow began falling across portions of central Illinois before noon on New Years Day, and continued at moderate to heavy rates for most of the following 24 hour period. Areas from Charleston southward also saw the snow mixed with rain or freezing rain at times. Once the snow ended, high winds developed, causing severe blowing and drifting snow and dangerous wind chills. The heaviest snow band extended from near Quincy, to Virginia, then through the Peoria and Bloomington areas to Champaign, where 14 or more inches of snow were common. The weight of the heavy snow caused many roofs and porches to collapse, causing one death and one injury.

January 2

- 1897: Spring made an unusually early appearance in central Illinois. Peoria saw its warmest January night on record, when the low temperature was only 59 degrees. Springfield also had a record warm January night, with a low of 56 degrees.
- 2003: Heavy snow accumulated between 6 and 10 inches across west central Illinois, from Lewistown to Jacksonville. The snow began after midnight on the 2nd, with snow accumulations reaching 6 inches by midday on the 3rd before diminishing to flurries by mid afternoon. Brooklyn, in western Schuyler County, reported 9.9 inches of snow. Heavy snow also accumulated over Vermilion County in east central Illinois, with 6.5 inches reported at Bismarck, north of Danville.
- 2016: [Record flooding](#) was occurring along the Mississippi River in southern Illinois, as a result of the heavy rain that had occurred in late December. The river at Cape Girardeau crested at 48.86 feet on the 1st, surpassing the Flood of 1993. At Thebes, a crest of 47.74 feet occurred early on the 2nd. A levee breach between Cairo and Thebes flooded 125 structures.

January 3

- 1950: An out of season tornado moved across Montgomery County, from near Chapman to Bingham. Four farm homes and several barns were destroyed by the F3 tornado.
- 1996: Central Illinois was affected by a major winter storm on the 2nd and 3rd. The storm produced up to 8 inches of snow, and 30 to 40 mph winds created near whiteout conditions at times. Numerous minor accidents were reported across the region, although two accidents resulted in four serious injuries.

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January 4

- 1996: Once the winter storm of the 2nd and 3rd cleared out of the region, another storm was close behind. This storm produced 2 to 7 inches of snow in central Illinois on the 4th. Totals included 6.2 inches in Springfield and 3.6 inches in Champaign.
- 1997: Unseasonably mild weather was found across central Illinois the first few days of 1997, peaking on this date. High temperatures included 68 degrees at Springfield, 65 degrees at Peoria, and 64 degrees at Champaign; record highs for the day were even broken well before sunrise.

January 5

- 1884: Some of the coldest temperatures in central Illinois history were observed on this date. The high temperature at Springfield only reached 12 degrees below zero, after a morning low of 22 below. Peoria's morning low of 27 below zero is the city's all-time record low.
- 1895: Springfield finally had a measurable snowfall. This was the first occurrence of measurable snow during the winter of 1894-95, establishing a record for the latest first measurable snowfall during a winter season.
- 1999: A clear sky, light winds, and thick snow cover, helped produce unusually bitter cold for central Illinois. A low temperature of 36 degrees below zero at Congerville, which is northwest of Bloomington, set a new record for the state of Illinois. Champaign and Lincoln both reported lows of 25 below zero, with 21 below at Springfield, and 19 below at Peoria.

January 6

- 2005: A major winter storm moved across the mid Mississippi Valley and into the Ohio Valley on January 5th and 6th. This system brought significant icing to much of central Illinois, with ice accumulations of one quarter to one half inch common. There were numerous reports of downed trees and power lines, as well as numerous traffic accidents. No fatalities or major injuries were reported.
- 2014: Unusually intense cold weather occurred across central and southeast Illinois, from the 5th through the 7th. High temperatures remained below zero in most areas on this date, and the high of 10 below at Normal was its coldest high temperature on record. Wind chills colder than 40 below zero were observed in Bloomington, Champaign, Danville, and Galesburg; they were as low as 30 below zero as far south as Flora and Lawrenceville.

January 7

- 1979: The southern half of Illinois was affected by a winter storm, with the heaviest snow across far southern parts of the state. 8 inches or more of snow were found west of Carbondale. Further north, up to 5 inches of snow fell near Vandalia.

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- 1989: Several out-of-season tornadoes occurred across southern Illinois. The strongest tornado, ranked as a "4" on a scale of 0 to 5, affected the town of Allendale, in Wabash County. Most of the town was destroyed, including 10 businesses and 47 homes. Although 50 people were injured, no one was killed.
- 2008: Northern Illinois saw only its second January tornado since 1950, as a strong [EF-3 strength tornado tracked from Poplar Grove to Lawrence](#), in Boone and McHenry Counties. The tornado damaged an apple orchard, many houses and farm buildings, and derailed a freight train. This occurred on an unseasonably warm day, with record highs of 65 degrees at Chicago and 63 degrees at Rockford.

January 8

- 1982: A 3-day blizzard began, affecting the northern 2/3 of Illinois. Actual snowfall from the storm was only around an inch, but the high winds led to whiteout conditions in many areas.
- 1998: A band of heavy snow began falling over northwest Illinois during the morning, and by evening, 4 to 8 inches of snow had fallen over much of the northern parts of the state. The heaviest snow fell from west of Peoria to Rockford, and as far east as some of the Chicago suburbs.

January 9

- 1997: The first in a series of winter storms affected central Illinois, with several inches of snow along with areas of blowing snow. Snowfall totals on this date included 5.4 inches in Springfield, 5.2 inches in Peoria, and 4.6 inches in Champaign. The heaviest snowfall of 11 inches was reported at Charleston, in Coles County.

January 10

- 1982: Bitterly cold weather was found across Illinois. Of the 109 weather reporting stations in the state, 48 of those reported lows of 20 degrees below zero or colder. Some of the coldest temperatures included 27 below zero at Rockford, 26 below zero at Chicago, and 25 below zero at Kankakee and Peoria.

January 11

- 1991: A 3-day winter storm was in progress across central Illinois. Trees and power lines suffered extensive damage due to freezing rain. Once the freezing rain changed to snow, 5-7 inches of snow fell across northern and central parts of the state.

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January 12

- 1890: A tornado touched down in St. Louis, and crossed the Mississippi River, ending just south of Venice. The worst damage from this tornado occurred in St. Louis. Further east and northeast, one tornado in McLean County passed through downtown Cooksville, damaging at least a dozen buildings, while a tornado in Richland County destroyed four homes northeast of Olney.
- 1918: Bloomington reported a low temperature of 23 degrees below zero. This is the city's all-time record low, which was later tied on January 20th, 1985.
- 2012: Snowfall of 2 to 5 inches were common in areas along and north of I-72, with an inch of snow from Jacksonville to Paris. While this in itself wasn't unusual, it was the first time during the 2011-12 winter season that most areas saw more than an inch fall on a single day. Locations from about Springfield to Bloomington westward saw about 320 days pass between 1-inch snowfalls.

January 13

- 1978: The winter of 1977-78 was cold and snowy. This date marked the first of 67 straight days in Springfield with at least 1 inch of snow on the ground, a record for the city.
- 1979: A strong winter storm moved across the region. Peoria reported a total of 12.2 inches of snow from this 3-day storm. The heaviest snow from this storm fell in the Chicago metropolitan area, where up to 2 feet of snow paralyzed the city. The southern half of the state did report some snow, with up to 6 inches near Charleston and north of I-72, as well as some freezing rain.

January 14

- 1918: The Springfield area was buried under a thick blanket of snow. The snow depth of 16 inches from the 14th through the 19th in 1918 is tied for 1st place on the city's list of deepest snow covers.

January 15

- 1972: Intense Arctic high pressure areas occasionally move into the northern U.S. at this time of year. Peoria reported a barometric pressure of 30.98 inches of mercury on this date, setting a record for the month of January.
- 1992: A fast-moving storm system brought near-blizzard conditions to much of central Illinois. Although only 2-4 inches of snow fell, northwest winds gusting to 50 mph produced whiteout conditions in some areas. Portions of Interstates 55, 57, and 74 were closed for several hours, as were many local and county roads.
- 1997: Illinois was affected by the second winter storm in a week, producing heavy snow, sleet,

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and freezing rain. Eight to 10 inches of snow fell in parts of the Chicago metropolitan area. Champaign reported 5.3 inches of snow, Springfield reported 5.2 inches, and Peoria had 4.7 inches. Parts of southern Illinois had ice accumulations around 2 inch. Cold air pouring in behind the storm system dropped wind chills to as low as 40 below zero.

January 16

- 1994: A major winter storm brought ice and heavy snow to southern parts of Illinois. Much of the area received up to 1/2 inch of ice accumulation, followed by 6-10 inches of snow. Schools and businesses closed, while road crews struggled to clear the roads.
- 2005: Unusually heavy rainfall occurred across central and southern Illinois during the first two weeks of January. Totals of 5 to 7 inches of rain were common south of I-70 during the first week, with 2 to 4 inches further north across central Illinois. Additional amounts of 1 to 3 inches occurred east of I-55 during the second week of January. These totals, well above normal for the entire month, followed a period of much above normal temperatures. These features combined to melt the snowpack from a pre-Christmas snowstorm, resulting in extensive flooding on area rivers. Record or near-record flooding occurred along the Wabash River in southeast Illinois. On the afternoon of the 15th, a levee breach was observed just north of Darwin, in eastern Clark County. [Water from the Wabash River](#) surrounded the towns of York and Darwin, and the only way to get to these towns was by boat. The river flooding required the evacuation of around 100 people from the town of Hutsonville in Crawford County. The flood waters washed out a bridge on Robinson-Marshall Road in Crawford County. The river came within a foot of overtopping a levee in eastern Lawrence County. A major levee failure on the Indiana side of the Wabash River caused the flooding on the Illinois side of the river to be less severe than it may have been.

January 17

- 1982: Record low temperatures fell all over the central and eastern U.S. On this date, Danville reported 26 degrees below zero, an all-time record. Low temperatures of 20 below zero or colder were also reported southwestward to Litchfield, as well as across far northern Illinois. The northern 2/3 of the state was being affected by blizzard conditions at the time.

January 18

- 1996: A strong cold front brought a wide variety of weather to central Illinois. Much of the area started out unseasonably mild, with temperatures in the upper 50s and lower 60s. The mild weather clashed with much colder temperatures to produce a line of severe thunderstorms which rapidly moved across the state. Some tree and power line damage was noted. In Champaign, the wind gusted to over 70 mph. Temperatures dropped sharply as the front passed, falling to near zero by midnight. In Springfield, the 57 degree span between high and low temperature was a record for the city; a 60 degree fall in Champaign was the 2nd largest temperature drop on record.

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January 19

- 1994: Bitterly cold air invaded the mid-Mississippi Valley. Several dozen record lows were set, including 28 below zero at Newton, 25 below zero at Champaign and 21 below zero at Peoria. The 25 below reading at Champaign also tied the city's all-time record low, first set on February 13, 1905.
- 2000: During the day and early evening hours, a winter storm with heavy snow affected Central Illinois with 4 to 6 inches of snow across a large area. There were some local 6 to 8 inch amounts of snow, mainly along and north of a Galesburg (Knox County) to Bloomington (McLean County) to Danville (Vermilion County) line. A cooperative observer in Minonk (Woodford County) reported 7.5 inches of snow. Blowing and drifting of snow was reported as well. The storm caused numerous road closures, as well as accidents. Two injuries were reported with a couple of the accidents (one in Peoria County and one in Vermilion County).

January 20

- 1985: Chicago's O'Hare International Airport reported an all-time record low temperature of 27 degrees below zero. The low of 26 below at Rockford was its second coldest temperature on record. Record lows for the date were also set further south, including 24 below zero at Champaign, 22 below zero at Peoria and Decatur, and 21 below zero at both Lincoln and Springfield.
- 2006: A winter storm moved across northern Illinois during the afternoon and evening hours of the 20th, and the early morning hours of the 21st. A band of very heavy snow fell in northeast Illinois across Kane County, southeast McHenry County, northwest Cook county and most of Lake County. Snowfall amounts in this band ranged from 10 to 12 inches. Outside of this heavy band, snowfall amounts ranged from 6 to 9 inches, but snowfall amounts tapered off quickly across south central DuPage and south central Cook counties, with those areas receiving 3 to 5 inches of snow. Some of the largest snowfall amounts included 12.0 inches in Elgin in Kane County; 11.7 inches in Grayslake in Lake County; 11.5 inches in Shabbona in DeKalb County; 11.0 inches Barrington in Cook County; and 9.0 inches in Paw Paw in Lee County. Northwest parts of the state saw ice accumulations around a quarter inch, enhanced by thunderstorms.

January 21

- 1959: A winter storm produced 8 to 12 inches of snow across the northern third of Illinois. Further south, a 70 mile wide area from Jerseyville to Danville received 1/2 to 1 inch of ice. Thousands of homes were without electricity for several days. This was described as the worst ice storm in Springfield since 1942, and the worst ice storm in Champaign in at least 50 years.

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- 1999: Large hail, up to golf ball size, fell in a small area along Interstate 57, south of Mattoon. The hail covered the highway, causing several vehicles to skid off the highway. No injuries were reported.

January 22

- 1982: Two winter storms brought significant freezing rain to central Illinois over a 3-day period ending on this date. The freezing rain was accompanied by some thunderstorms on the 22nd. Glaze from this ice storm affected 70% of the state, and was accompanied by high winds.
- 2002: As a line moved across northeast Illinois, a bolt of lightning struck a tree in Mount Prospect. The tree exploded into thousands of pieces, some of which were 3 to 5 feet long. One of these large pieces struck a woman walking her dog. Although she was critically injured, she recovered from her injuries. The flying pieces of the tree broke 3 windows and damaged garage doors and siding.

January 23

- 1909: Unseasonably mild air spread over central Illinois. The average temperature of 64 degrees in Springfield was a full 40 degrees above normal for the date. The day's high of 73 degrees set a record for the month of January. Month record highs were also set at Peoria, with 71 degrees, and Champaign, with 70 degrees.

January 24

- 1967: Out-of-season tornadoes affected parts of northern and central Illinois. One strong tornado in Mason County killed one person and injured 3. Another tornado moved across the Champaign-Urbana area, injuring 5 people. Other strong tornadoes were reported across Carroll County in Mt. Carroll, where 12 people were injured, and near Gladstone in Henderson County.
- 1979: Blizzard conditions affected the northwest 1/2 of Illinois, accompanied by as much as 10 inches of snow near Chicago and Pontiac. The southeast 1/2 of the state saw some freezing rain, as well as 2-6 inches of snow.

January 25

- 1950: A tornado struck Momence, in Kankakee County. A concrete block store was destroyed, and other buildings damaged, on the southeast side of town. A 20 foot long steel beam was driven into the ground.
- 1977: This was the last day of a 28 day period where Springfield had high temperatures of 32 degrees or below. By the time the month ended, the city saw new records established for monthly snowfall (21.7 inches) and average January temperature (10.3 degrees).

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January 26

- 1994: The northern half of Illinois was coated with 1/4 to 1/2 inch of freezing rain and sleet. Temperatures moderated a bit by the next day, but heavy rain fell on top of the ice in the Chicago metropolitan area, resulting in flooding of streets and basements. Up to 60,000 customers in the Chicago area were without power due to the storm, some for several days.
- 2009: A major winter storm affected southern Illinois through the 28th. On the northern edge, 8 to 12 inches of snow fell from Shelbyville to Paris, with 6 to 10 inches common southward across most of the remainder of Illinois. Near the Ohio River, ice accumulated to around an inch, with local amounts close to 2 inches.

January 27

- 1967: Heavy snow fell across the nation's midsection. A two-day storm in Illinois produced 10 inches or more north of a Quincy to Bloomington line, while major ice accumulations were noted elsewhere across central Illinois. The [Chicago metropolitan area received the brunt of the heavy snow](#), with up to 20 inches in the southern metro area. Travel was greatly crippled for a few days. Over 50 deaths were indirectly related to the storm.

January 28

- 1979: January 1979 was one of the snowiest months on record in parts of central Illinois. Snowfall totals for the month included 31.5 inches in Paris, 25.8 inches in Charleston, 25 inches in Decatur, 24.7 inches in Peoria, 24.6 inches in Bloomington, and 20 inches at Hillsboro.

January 29

- 1880: The warmest January on record was coming to an end in central Illinois. Springfield reported an average temperature of 44.2 degrees during the month, with an average of 40.2 degrees in Peoria. This was close to 20 degrees above normal.
- 2008: A sharp cold front moved across the state during the day, producing a drastic temperature drop. Temperatures fell 20 to 40 degrees in just a couple hours, with areas from Springfield to St. Louis seeing temperatures fall as much as 50 degrees between noon and 6 pm. Temperatures in the mid 60s in central Illinois at midday had fallen to near zero by the next morning.

January 30

- 2002: A winter storm produced freezing rain and snow across central Illinois. Ice accumulation of 1/4 to 2 inch was common across Fulton, southern Peoria, Mason, Tazewell, Woodford and McLean Counties. Around a half inch of ice accumulated across Woodford County, with local 1 inch amounts of ice near Eureka. Just to the north, 6 to 9 inches of snow accumulated across Knox, Stark, Marshall and northern Peoria counties along with a quarter to half inch of ice. Several trees and power lines were downed from ice accumulations across Peoria and surrounding counties lasting from several hours to a

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couple of days.

January 31

- 1982: A winter storm moving northeast out of the southern Plains states affected central and southern Illinois with very heavy snowfall during the last few days of the month. The heaviest snowfall was found southeast of St. Louis, where thunderstorms contributed to the 20 inch snow total. A large area of 12 inches or more of snow extended northeast from St. Louis to the Champaign area, where some thunderstorms were also reported. 16 inches of snow were reported in parts of Edgar County.
- 1989: A January thaw was in full force in central Illinois. Peoria's high temperature of 70 degrees set a record for the date, and was only the second time a high of 70 or above has been noted in Peoria during January.