

Illinois Weather Trivia for July

July 1

- 1879: Weather records began in Springfield. The first observing site was downtown, on top of the Springer building at 6th and Monroe Streets, recording high and low temperature, as well as precipitation. The official observing site remained in downtown Springfield until the mid 1930's, when a second site was added at the old Southwest Airport. Even though weather observations were taken at Southwest Airport and later Capital Airport, the downtown weather office did not close until 1954.

July 2

- 1904: Unseasonably cool weather was found across central Illinois. Champaign reported a low temperature of 41 degrees and Decatur reported 45 degrees, both setting records for the month of July. Lows of 48 at Peoria and 53 at Springfield were daily records.

July 3

- 1873: A tornado in Hancock County, in far west central Illinois, destroyed several farms. From a distance, witnesses initially thought the tornado was smoke from a fire. A child was killed after being carried 500 yards; 10 other people were injured.

July 4

- 1980: Extremely humid weather was found across central Illinois on this Independence Day. Springfield reported 11 consecutive hours with a dew point temperature of 80 degrees or higher, before a line of severe thunderstorms brought cooler air to the region. Dew points of 80 degrees are extremely high for central Illinois, and would even be a bit unusual in a normally humid location such as Florida.

July 5

- 2000: Thunderstorms repeatedly moved over parts of southeast Illinois during the morning, producing rainfall of 5 to 6 inches. Numerous roads were reported closed by flood waters. A road north of Noble, in Richland County, collapsed. Flooding along highway 40 west of Effingham caused a 6 by 10 foot hole underneath the pavement, and a train track trestle over the Salt Creek River had a 50 by 100 foot hole washed out under the tracks. Three homes in Newton were evacuated due to flooding, and 4 mobile homes and one house in Wheeler were also evacuated.

July 6

- 1998: A narrow band of thunderstorms dumped between 3-4 inches of rain, in less than 3 hours, over parts of north central and northeast Illinois. In LaSalle County, the heavy rain caused a portion of a road to collapse, leaving a hole about 12 feet wide, and 10 feet deep.

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July 7

- 1915: A tornado touched down just west of Lawrenceville, in southeastern Illinois, and moved east. As the tornado moved into town, it widened, damaging nearly every building in town. One person was killed.
- 2012: Extensive drought over central and southeast Illinois led to an unusually high number of 100 degree days during the summer. Olney and Palestine each had fifteen 100-degree days, with 14 days at Charleston, 12 days at Normal, and 11 days at Springfield. On this particular date, high temperatures reached 109 degrees at Palestine and 108 degrees at Effingham.

July 8

- 2001: Downburst winds caused considerable damage on the west side of Hoopeston. Three businesses were destroyed, one hundred homes sustained minor to moderate damage, and the EMS building was destroyed. Also, the sewer department suffered major damage, and a church suffered minor damage. Numerous trees, tree limbs, power poles, and power lines were blown down in Hoopeston and areas to the southeast, east of Rossville. No injuries or deaths were reported. Damage was estimated around \$8.5 million.

July 9

- 1992: Severe thunderstorms produced a swath of very large and damaging hail and damaging winds. Golfball-size hail and 60 mph winds were reported on the west side of Decatur, with numerous roofs and automobiles damaged by the hail. Hail grew to nearly the size of baseballs by the time the storms reached the Charleston/Mattoon areas. Total damage from the storms was estimated around \$5 million.
- 2001: Flash flooding affected many areas in eastern Illinois, between Danville and Lawrenceville. Observers and radar estimates indicated from 8 to 10 inches of rain fell in parts of Edgar and Coles Counties, causing widespread flooding. One person died several hours after the heavy rain ended, when he drove into a flooded area near Oakland, in Coles County.

July 10

- 2000: Thunderstorms brought heavy rain and strong winds to northeast Illinois, during the early morning hours. Flash flooding occurred in parts of LaSalle, DeKalb, Kendall and Kankakee Counties, where rainfall of 4 to 7 inches was reported. Flooding ripped up 50 feet of pavement in downtown Kankakee.

July 11

- 1909: A tornado in the eastern St. Louis metropolitan area began as a waterspout on the Mississippi River, driving a steamer into a bridge. On land, the tornado destroyed several barns and damaged 15 homes and two factories in the west part of Alton.

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- 1936: Intense heat continued to stifle the residents of central Illinois. Record highs were established at Lincoln, with 109 degrees; Peoria, 108 degrees; Decatur, 107 degrees; and 105 degrees at both Springfield and Champaign.

July 12

- 1995: An intense heat wave affected much of the Midwest for a 4-day period beginning on this day. [The worst effects of the heat were noted in the Chicago metropolitan area](#), where 583 people died from the heat. Temperatures across the area reached as high as 105 degrees, with heat index values peaking at 125 degrees. Electricity and water usage reached record levels, causing periodic outages.
- 2014: Very heavy rain fell over portions of central and eastern Illinois during the early morning hours. Rain totals of 3 to 6 inches were common from southern Livingston County, southeast through portions of Champaign and Piatt Counties, producing flash flooding.
- 2017: [Multiple waves of thunderstorms moved across northeast Illinois](#) from late on the 11th into the morning of the 12th. Rainfall amounts of 4 to 7 inches were common from the northwest Chicago suburbs to the Wisconsin border near Waukegan. Major to record river flooding occurred on the Fox and Des Plaines Rivers as a result.

July 13

- 1936: [Record heat occurred across much of the U.S. during the summer of 1936](#). In Springfield, the heat peaked on this day, with a high temperature of 108 degrees. Nighttime didn't provide much relief, as the temperature only fell to 84 degrees, the warmest night in Springfield history. From the 4th through the 15th, the high in Springfield was at least 100 degrees. The average temperature during the entire month was 86.2 degrees, the warmest July on record.
- 1993: Major flooding on the Mississippi River produced a record river crest at Quincy of 32.3 feet; the old record of 28.9 feet was set in April of 1973. At mid-month, only 5 of 28 bridges that cross the river into Illinois were open.
- 2004: A [violent tornado quickly developed across Woodford County](#) during the mid afternoon. This tornado was at F4 intensity as it demolished a manufacturing plant 4 miles west of Roanoke. Although 140 people were inside at the time, all escaped injury by reaching storm shelters a few minutes before the tornado's arrival. Steel beams and metal siding from the plant were found approximately three quarters of a mile east in a farm field. Four farmsteads east of the plant were severely damaged or destroyed.

July 14

- 1936: The intense heat wave that affected Illinois during the month produced all-time record high temperatures at the following cities on this date: Mount Vernon (114 degrees), Danville (112 degrees), Olney (112 degrees), and Charleston (110 degrees).
- 1954: Although the heat wave of 1936 produced some of the hottest weather in central Illinois history, another heat wave on this date in 1954 brought more all-time record high temperatures in excess of 110 degrees to central Illinois. Records included 115 degrees

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at Pana, 114 degrees at Jacksonville and Virden, 113 degrees at Decatur, 112 degrees at Quincy and Springfield, and 111 degrees at Mattoon. Champaign also established an all-time record high of 109 degrees. At East St. Louis, the high temperature of 117 degrees set a record for the entire state of Illinois.

July 15

- 1936: The heat wave of July 1936 peaked on this date in Peoria and Lincoln, with an all-time record high temperature of 113 degrees. Champaign's high temperature of 107 degrees stood as an all-time record until 1954.

July 16

- 1980: Millions of dollars in damage was done by a strong microburst and blinding rain that hit the south side of Chicago during the morning. Winds were estimated to be as high as 100 mph in the microburst. Further west, the same storm system produced a tornado near the town of Hampshire, destroying two silos containing 48,000 pounds of corn.
- 2016: [A strong tornado moved through Delavan](#), in southern Tazewell County, late in the evening. Two people were injured by this tornado, which had an estimated maximum wind speed of 120 mph.

July 17

- 1903: Several tornadoes moved across northern and central Illinois during the late afternoon and early evening. The two most significant tornadoes occurred in LaSalle County, affecting the towns of Mendota and Streator. Ten people were killed by the two storms. Five of the deaths occurred at a race track, where people were taking shelter under a grandstand when it collapsed.

July 18

- 1996: [A massive rainstorm in north central and northeast Illinois](#) led to widespread flooding. Aurora reported 16.94 inches of rain, establishing a state record for the most rain in a single day. Other heavy totals included 13.60 inches at Joliet, 9.24 inches in Wheaton, 8.09 inches in DeKalb, and 7.82 inches at Elgin.

July 19

- 1921: A heat wave in central Illinois wrapped up. In Springfield, this was the last of 22 consecutive days that saw temperatures of at least 90 degrees. This is the city's record for such heat.
- 2006: A severe weather outbreak occurred across portions of the middle and upper Mississippi River valley. Originating in southern Minnesota during the morning, it curved southeast into eastern Iowa, then moved across central and western Illinois during the mid to late afternoon. By early evening, it had [curved southwest and moved across the St. Louis area](#), where it did extensive damage and left a half million people without

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power. Wind gusts near Bunker Hill, in southern Macoupin County, were reported to be 90 mph.

July 20

- An average summer in central Illinois usually sees one or two days with high temperatures of 100 degrees or higher. An analysis of Springfield weather records, which began in 1879, indicate that the longest period between 100 degree highs is 15 years, from 1996 to 2010.

July 21

- 2001: Thunderstorms formed along a lake breeze in northeast Illinois during the late afternoon and evening. Some damage occurred across Will and Cook Counties, but the main damage was from torrential rainfall. The heaviest rain fell across southwest Cook County, extreme northeast Will County, and central DuPage County. Water burst through a basement foundation in Tinley Park, filling the basement and topping out at 6 feet, 11 inches deep. Several homes in Orland Park and Tinley Park had 2 to 4 feet of water in basements. Streets were also flooded in these areas. Some rainfall totals from this event include 3.08 inches in Olympia Fields, 2.79 inches in Park Forest, 2.30 inches in Winfield, and 2.03 inches in Glenwood. There were no reports of injuries.
- 2006: [Widespread damaging winds](#), estimated around 90 MPH, raked most of Jefferson County in south central Illinois. The city of Mount Vernon was especially hard hit, where about 14% of all homes received at least minor damage. Several thousands of trees were blown down, landing on cars, power lines, roads, and houses. In Mount Vernon, damage assessments indicated 1,107 homes were affected by some type of damage. 491 homes received minor damage such as roofs blown off, 152 received major damage, and 18 were destroyed. On Interstate 57, several semis were blown off the road or overturned, and a manufactured home was blown onto the southbound shoulder from a dealership located just off the highway.

July 22

- 1993: Record precipitation that occurred across a good portion of the mid-Mississippi valley during the summer fell as far east as parts of central Illinois. During the month of July, Canton reported 12.66 inches of rain and Peoria reported 10.15 inches, both setting a record for the month. Springfield's 9.46 inches was good enough for the 2nd wettest July on record.

July 23

- 1975: Severe thunderstorms affected parts of northern and central Illinois. In Peoria, winds gusting to 85 mph knocked over trees. Two tornadoes affected Fulton County. The first passed through mainly rural areas. The second tornado touched down in Fiatt and moved east to Canton, where 127 businesses and 100 homes were destroyed. 300 other homes and 100 trailers were damaged; total damages were around \$20 million. Two people were killed as the tornado moved through a mobile home park. Power lines were downed during the storm; some areas were without power until the 28th.

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July 24

- 2005: Excessive heat and humidity occurred across the region during the second part of July. Daytime temperatures ranged from the mid 90s to around 105 degrees, with heat index values of 105 to 115. On this date, Peoria reported its first 100 degree day in 10 years with a high of 104 degrees, which was its warmest reading since a 105 degree temperature in July 1988. The dry conditions across the region helped to temper the stifling humidity that normally occurs across this area during the summer.
- 2011: Excessive heat and humidity plagued central Illinois during the month. The worst conditions were from the 17th through the 24th, when an Excessive Heat Warning was in effect. Heat index values during the period reached as high as 115 degrees. Urbana reported its first 100-degree day since 1955, and Springfield's 14 straight days of 90+ degree highs was its first such occurrence since 1955.

July 25

- 1988: During the drought of 1988, the driest July on record was observed at Springfield, with 0.05 inch, and Peoria, 0.33 inch. Springfield's total also established the city's 5th driest month ever.

July 26

- 1911: Unseasonably cool summer weather brought a July record low temperature of 46 degrees at Peoria. Record lows for the date were also set at Lincoln, with 44 degrees; Champaign, with 47 degrees; and Decatur, with 48 degrees.

July 27

- 1981: Thunderstorms moved across central Illinois around sunrise, producing 4.33 inches of rain at Springfield's Capital Airport. This set a record for single-day rainfall during July in Springfield.
- 2006: Major flooding affected the city of Joliet during the afternoon and evening hours. Torrential rains fell across parts of the city, with 5.50 inches falling in just 90 minutes between 4 pm and 530 pm near Black Road and Infantry Drive. Storm total rainfall of 6.13 inches was reported on the west side of Joliet. Approximately 30 homes and businesses suffered basement flooding. Center Street ramps to Interstate 80 were closed with four feet of standing water. Cars were stranded in 4 to 5 feet of water under the viaduct on Route 30 east of Briggs Street. Pavement buckled under the force of the flood waters at Western and Cass Avenues.

July 28

- 1992: All-time record rains for a single month were in the process of being broken at the following cities: Decatur, with 16.72 inches; Tuscola, with 14.03 inches, and Champaign, 13.82 inches.

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July 29

- 1981: Springfield reported a total of 10.76 inches of rain during the month, establishing a July record. Much of the total was due to two major rainstorms during the month, one which produced 3 inches of rain, and the other, 4-1/3 inches.

July 30

- 1999: Intense heat was noted throughout Illinois, during the last few days of July 1999. [Chicago set an all-time dew point record of 82 degrees](#) the morning of the 30th, when the minimum heat index in Chicago failed to fall below 100. 99 people died from the heat in the Chicago area.

July 31

- 2014: Prolonged periods of below normal temperatures persisted over much of the Midwest during the month. This resulted in new records for the coolest July being established at Decatur, Effingham, Lincoln, Olney, and Urbana.