

# January Weather Wrap

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January was wet and a little warmer than normal, with three periods of active weather, interspersed with dry and mild weather. Winds were well-behaved during the month as well, with no major wind events. We did have a strong "Chinook" wind event that helped melt a lot of snow quickly, but overall winds did not reach damaging levels.

January started off cold and snowy, with temperatures reaching well below zero each morning from the 1st through the 4th. Temperatures finally reached to freezing and barely above on the afternoons of the 3rd and 4th. Fresh snow on each day from the 1st through the 3rd accumulated anywhere from 5 to 8 inches of new snow. This also allowed the snowpack to build up substantially, reaching 8 to 12 inches around the region, making for some beautiful winter scenery.

The week of Jan. 5 started off mild and dry, with highs reaching the low to mid-50s on both the 5th and 6th. But we would be in for a weather roller coaster ride for the remainder of the week, starting with a quick-moving cold front on the 7th. High temperatures were reached at midnight, then fell through the day, with daytime highs only reaching the mid-teens. Dense fog, freezing drizzle, and some light snow filled in quickly and stuck around through the evening of the 7th.

Westerly winds began to kick in just after midnight on the 8th, scouring out the low clouds and fog and allowing for clear skies and quiet weather through that afternoon ahead of another cold front. Low clouds and fog filled back in that afternoon, with dense fog, freezing drizzle, and urries again affecting the area the rest of the 8th and through the 9th. Temperatures struggled to reach the low 20s on the 9th as we were stuck in the fog and low clouds.

Again, westerly winds kicked in during the evening of the 9th, clearing out the fog and low clouds and allowing for clear skies to return on the 10th. Temperatures rebounded as well, reaching the upper 40s that afternoon.

Another, more organized storm system arrived during the afternoon of the 11th, with light snow filling in quickly. This system accumulated 2 to 3 inches of snow before midnight on the 12th, with even heavier amounts in town and around the east side of Colorado Springs, making for some slick roads around the region

The week of the 12th started off cool and unsettled, but dry and mild conditions moved in for the second half of the week. Temperatures on the 12th and 13th did not reach above freezing, with a little light snow accumulating as well. Areas of low clouds and fog added to the wintry feel each day as well. Temperatures were slightly warmer the next day, with mid-30s for highs, right about normal for the second week of January. Then, high pressure built in from the west/southwest over the rest of the week and into the weekend. This allowed temperatures to jump to above-normal levels, with highs in the 40s and 50s from the 15th through the 18th. We were mostly sunny and dry through the period. This would qualify as our typical "January thaw."

Active weather started of the week of the 19th, then turned to quiet weather by the end of the week. Monday the 19th started off a little warmer than normal, with highs in the upper 40s and high clouds at times. However, a storm was moving through the Southwestern U.S. and heading for Colorado, while at the same time cold air was moving from the north. These two storms came together over the region starting late on the 20th and continuing into the evening of the 21st. Snow fell, heavy at times, during the period, but winds were light most of the time. Most areas received a fresh 6 to 10 inches of snowfall, helping to push our monthly total to slightly above average levels.

With the fresh snow on the ground and light winds, temperatures stayed in the 20s for highs on the 21st and 22nd, with overnight lows dipping to around zero on the mornings of the 22nd and 23rd. High pressure began to build in for the rest of the week, with temperatures slowly moderating from the 30s on the 23rd to the upper 40s by the 25th. The warm up was slowed down as much of the

sun's energy was used up trying to melt the freshly fallen snow.

Mild weather quickly moved in over the next couple of days, with highs reaching into the upper 50s and even low 60s on the 26th and 27th. Temperatures on the 27th reached to daily record levels all along the Front Range. A storm system affected much of Colorado over the last two days of the month, but because the storm took a southerly track, we missed out on the heaviest snow. Light snow and fog were around at times on the 30th, with steadier snow from late morning through afternoon of the 31st.

## A look ahead

February is often a dry and cold month for the region as we move toward the snowy and unsettled conditions of March and April. Precipitation averages less than an inch, with average high temperatures in the 30s. It can get very cold in February with arctic air making strong pushes into the region, but days begin to get a little longer, which leads to some nice, sunny days and snow melts faster.

## January 2015 Weather Statistics

Average High	41.1° (+0.7°)
100-year return frequency value max	48.4° min 30.8°
Average Low	15.2° (+2.7°)
100-year return frequency value max	26.6° min 6.6°
Highest Temperature	62° on the 27 <sup>th</sup>
Lowest Temperature	-9° on the 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Monthly Precipitation	0.99"
	(+0.33" 46% above normal)
100-year return frequency value max	1.56" min 0.01"
Monthly Snowfall	21.6" (+7.7", 45% above normal)
Season to Date Snow	44.9" (-5.2", 11% below normal)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	12.71"
	(+0.88", 7% above normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	1143 (-52)
Cooling Degree Days	0

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# Top weather events of 2014

By Bill Kappel

## Arctic cold in early February

Very cold air moved into the Tri-Lakes region during the first week of February. Temperatures dropped below zero by 5 p.m. on the 4th and stayed there through the morning of the 6th. Lows bottomed out in the minus 20 range.

## Another dry June

For the second year in a row, rainfall during June was well below normal, with most areas accumulating less than an inch of rainfall during the month. Temperatures were also well above normal, topping out at about 90°F on the 30th.

## Wet summer

After a dry June, the Southwest monsoon kicked

in with earnest, bringing wet conditions to the region in July and August. Some areas, especially on the southern side of the Palmer Divide and into Colorado Springs, received more than 10 inches of rainfall during the period.

## Early cold in September, then warm through October

Cold air and a little snow made an early appearance during the second week of September to end what had been a week and a half of wet weather. Temperatures dipped below freezing on the 12th and 13th. Temperatures warmed quickly after this and stayed mainly mild through the end of October.

## Record November cold snap

After a quiet fall, record cold moved in during the second week of November. Temperatures dropped from the low 60s during the late morning hours of the 10th to the single digits by later that afternoon behind a strong cold front. Temperatures continued to fall over the next few days.

## Cold to end the year

A final very cold air mass invaded the region during the last week of the year. Starting late on Christmas afternoon and extending through the New Year, temperatures were cold, reaching double digits below zero on the 27th, 30th, and 31st. Highs stayed below zero on the 30th as well.

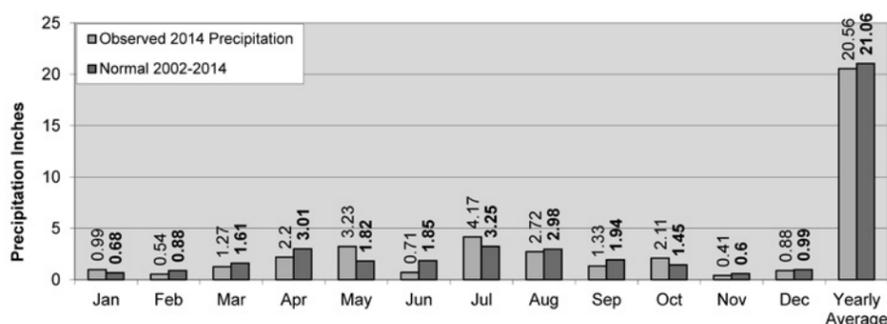
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Bill's 2014 Weather Summary

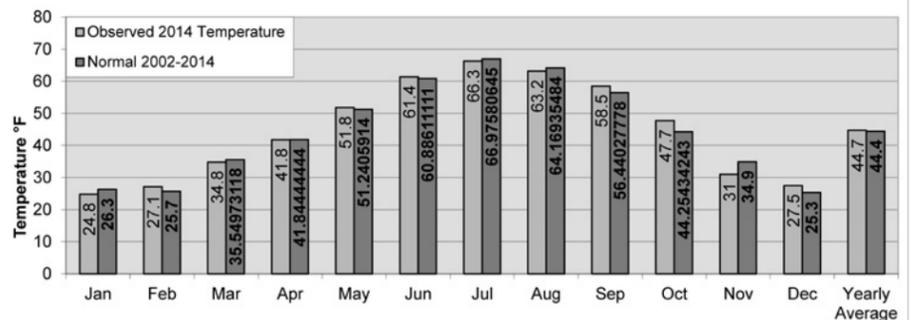
	TEMPERATURE		EXTREMES				MONTHLY				HEATING DEGREE DAYS	COOLING DEGREE DAYS
	AVG	AVG	2014		NORMAL		2014		NORMAL			
	MAX	MIN	AVG	NORMAL	HIGH	LOW	PRECIP	PRECIP	SNOWFALL	SNOW		
JAN	39.6	10.0	24.8	26.3	55	-12	0.99	0.68	19.6	12.8	1247	
FEB	40.9	13.4	27.1	25.7	56	-23	0.54	0.88	13.9	16.3	1061	
MAR	50.2	19.5	34.8	35.5	65	-3	1.27	1.61	14.6	20.6	1079	
APR	57.1	26.4	41.8	41.8	74	10	2.20	3.01	23.8	27.5	698	
MAY	66.8	36.8	51.8	51.2	83	19	3.23	1.82	11.6	5.5	410	
JUN	78.1	44.7	61.4	60.9	91	35	0.71	1.85	0.0	0.1	125	17
JUL	80.5	52.5	66.3	67.0	92	45	4.17	3.25	0.0	0.0	53	95
AUG	80.0	48.5	63.2	64.2	85	38	2.72	2.98	0.0	0.0	73	18
SEP	73.4	43.7	58.5	56.4	87	28	1.33	1.94	0.2	0.5	200	6
OCT	62.2	33.3	47.7	44.3	75	25	2.11	1.45	0.9	11.8	536	
NOV	46.1	16.0	31.0	34.9	66	-15	0.41	0.60	7.9	9.1	1019	
DEC	39.8	15.2	27.5	25.3	61	-17	0.88	0.99	14.4	17.5	1164	
ANNUAL	59.6	30.0	44.7	44.4	92	-23	20.56	21.06	106.9	121.6	7665	136

\*\*\*NOTE: BOTH SNOWFALL AND HEATING DEGREE DAYS ARE TOTALED ON A SEASONAL BASIS (JUL 1 TO JUN 30)...AND ON A YEARLY BASIS (JAN 1 TO DEC 31).

2014 Monthly Average Precipitation



2014 Monthly Average Temperatures



2014 Monthly Average Snowfall

