

# *The Pennsylvania Observer*

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## **March 2011 – Pennsylvania Weather Recap**

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The beginning of March started off wet and warm as low pressure moved across the state. With maximum temperatures averaging close to 60 degrees Fahrenheit and some parts of Pennsylvania reporting an inch of rain, it felt as though spring was making an early entrance. However, these warmer than average readings were short-lived and the state was rudely re-introduced to more normal March temperatures, which averaged between 40 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit. With a short period of mild weather, Pennsylvania saw even wetter conditions; only days into the month a stronger low crossed the Commonwealth. It dropped more than 10 inches of snow from State College to the New York border, and broke both the maximum daily rainfall record and the maximum daily snowfall record for Williamsport, with 1.78 inches of precipitation and 6 inches of snowfall reported.

Just three days after this storm, an occluded low pressure system moved into Pennsylvania bringing with it more wet weather. Rainfall broke another maximum daily rainfall for Mount Pocono, with a reported 4.36 inches of rain. Flooding was widespread in the central and eastern sections of the state. After this system, the weather returned to normal for about 10 days. It was not until the end of the month when parts of Pennsylvania started experiencing severe weather.

Unlike the saying “in like a lion and out like a lamb”, March went out like a lion as a warm front moved into the southwestern region of Pennsylvania. In the unstable, almost sultry air mass, a line of severe thunderstorms produced a tornado. On March 23rd, an EF2 tornado ripped through Hempfield Township. Associated with this storm, most of southwestern Pennsylvania reported numerous occurrences of pea to quarter-sized hail. Strong wind gusts also associated with this severe storm damaged the roofs of numerous homes, downed many trees, and also broke power lines. The final week of March featured five consecutive sunny days with readings more than 10 degrees below normal as Arctic air invaded the region. As the cold air was pushed away, three periods of snow affected portions of the state with more than a half foot falling in the Poconos as the month closed. All in all, between the record breaking daily amounts of precipitation/snow and tornado producing severe storms, March certainly had its fair share of ferocity.

Here are the weather extremes across Pennsylvania (observations taken at 8AM EDT) during March 2011 from the NWS Cooperative & ASOS Networks. The extremes occurred in the 24-hour period prior to the date listed.

Parameter	Location	Value	Date (8 AM EDT)	County
Highest Temperature	Pottstown	81°F	March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Montgomery
Lowest Temperature	Oswayo	-3°F	March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Potter
Greatest Cumulative Liquid Precipitation	Dehart Dam	10.5"	-	Dauphin
Least Cumulative Liquid Precipitation	Greensburg	3.55	-	Westmoreland
Greatest Monthly Snowfall	Laporte	29"	-	Sullivan

## ***Weather Stories***

**Weather service confirms tornado in western Pa.**

[http://www.timesonline.com/news/state/homes-damaged-in-possible-w-pa-tornado/article\\_6e357409-7388-5105-8d42-f7b52edbe742.html](http://www.timesonline.com/news/state/homes-damaged-in-possible-w-pa-tornado/article_6e357409-7388-5105-8d42-f7b52edbe742.html)

**Maple producers hope for better year**

<http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/business/maple-producers-hope-for-better-year-1.1120912#axzz1Hu6xv3ZW>

**Hundreds flee rising rivers in the East**

[http://www.usatoday.com/weather/floods/2011-03-11-eastern-floods\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/weather/floods/2011-03-11-eastern-floods_N.htm)

**Mild Weather Brings Out Spring Skiers**

<http://www.wmur.com/r/27243367/detail.html>