

The Pennsylvania Observer

August 3, 2009



July 2009 - Pennsylvania Weather Recap

Written by: Dan DePodwin

After a cool month of June, some hoped July would bring usual summertime warmth to the state of Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, for the first half of the month, a stubborn upper-level trough situated over southeastern Canada and the Great Lakes brought persistent below average temperatures and rounds of showers and thunderstorms to the Commonwealth. Although warmer weather moved in towards the end of the month, July finished well below average temperature-wise.

The month started off on a wet note as an area of low pressure moved from the Great Lakes to southern Quebec. Rainfall was scattered throughout the state with Reading receiving 1.42" (36.07mm) from the 1st-3rd while Downingtown recorded only 0.11" (2.79mm) in the same time span. As the system of low pressure pulled northward, dry and pleasant conditions prevailed for the holiday weekend. The 4th of July featured a mix of sun and clouds with temperatures in the 70s throughout much of the state.

As the next work week began on the 6th, a weak cold front pushed through Pennsylvania bringing isolated showers to much of the state with the exception of the Pocono Region where 0.66" (16.76mm) fell in Hawley. Behind the front, a large dome of high pressure built into the region for the 8th-10th keeping conditions pleasant.

High pressure began to creep off the East Coast on the 10th ahead of an approaching cold front. In advance of the front, temperatures in the western half of the state reached well into the 80s on the 11th. This Saturday also featured some severe storms across the Commonwealth associated with the aforementioned front. High wind reports were common across the central portion of the state and a tornado even was reported on the ground in Northumberland County. Places in Carbon County received upwards of 2.50" (63.50mm) of rain from the storms.

Much cooler air rushed into the state from the 12th-14th due to an unseasonably strong Canadian high pressure system. Well below normal temperatures were common with near record nighttime readings in northwest counties. Some cool spots included: 40F (4.4C) in Chandlers Valley on the 14th and 38F (3.3C) in Oswayo on the 15th. These low temperatures are usually seen at the end of September, not in the middle of July!

However, these cold temperatures would be short-lived. On the 16th, a warm and humid southerly flow ahead of a cold front allowed some locations in southern Pennsylvania to reach 90F (32.2C) for the first time this summer. The hot spot was Shippensburg where 93 was the high temperature. Rainy weather on Friday, associated with a large area of low pressure, kept temperatures in check for the end of the work week. Rainfall amounts were moderate with Latrobe receiving 1.25" (31.75mm). The wet weather cleared out for the weekend of the 18th. It was cool however, with a high temperature of only 69F (20.5C) in State College, PA on the 18th.

The work week of the 20th began with dry weather across the state but muggy conditions were felt for the rest of the week as a strong southerly flow brought scattered showers and storms to the Commonwealth. Rainfall amounts were not evenly distributed. State College received 3.28” (83.31mm) while Latrobe only received 0.60” (15.24mm). Some locations in western Pennsylvania received hail on the 21st from a line of severe thunderstorms. As a low pressure center moved through the mid-Atlantic on the 24th, more rain and storms occurred throughout the state.

Behind this system, clear skies but humid conditions built in for the weekend as a Bermuda High pumped sultry air along the Eastern Seaboard. A cold front entered this warm and humid air-mass on the 26th, spawning scattered severe storms. A tornado was even reported in Elk County. The final week of the month consisted of more humid weather and scattered showers and storms. Widespread rain occurred on the 29th with 2.07” (52.58mm) falling in Dingmans Ferry. More severe weather occurred in the eastern third of the state with a tornado being reported in Stroudsburg. Drier weather returned on the 30th before more showers moved in on the last day of the month.

Overall, July 2009 was one of the coldest on record (since 1895) throughout the state of Pennsylvania. Temperatures in Harrisburg reached above 90F (32C) only one time during the month which is well below average (9 days). Rainfall was plentiful for much of the state with the exception of the southwestern part. Erie was extremely wet with 6.89” (175.00mm) while Lancaster only reported 2.69” (68.33mm). In the end, although the calendar said July, the weather on many days (especially during the first half of the month) felt like May.

Here are the weather extremes across Pennsylvania (**observations taken at 8AM EDT**) during July 2008 from the NWS Cooperative & ASOS Networks of which our office receives routine observations. The extremes occurred in the 24-hour period prior to the date listed.

Parameter	Location	Value	Date (8 AM EDT)	County
Highest Temperature	Shippensburg	93°F	July 17 th	Cumberland
Lowest Temperature	Oswayo	38°F	July 14 th	Potter
Greatest Cumulative Liquid Precipitation	West Hickory	8.36”	July 1 st – July 31 st	Forest
Least Cumulative Liquid Precipitation	Berlin	1.04”	July 1st – July 31st	Somerset

Links to Pennsylvania Weather Stories during July, 2009

A dozen tornadoes in Monroe since records are kept

<http://www.poconorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090731/NEWS/907319997/-1/NEWSMAP>

Violent Tornado Rips Through Pennsylvania Towns in Pocono Mountains

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,535612,00.html?test=latestnews>

Late tomato blight reported in central Pennsylvania

<http://www.sungazette.com/page/content.detail/id/530047.html?nav=5011>

Weather History - July 30: Record Heat, Tropics, Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Hail and Flooding

<http://www.examiner.com/x-4645-Wilmington-Weather-Examiner~y2009m7d29-Weather-History--July-30-Record-Heat-Tropics-Severe-Storms-Tornadoes-Hail-and-Flooding>

Weather kills gypsy moths

<http://www.centredaily.com/news/local/story/1422182.html>