

## FEATURED CLIMATE HIGHLIGHT

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September 2014 was a very dry month across the state of Pennsylvania. In fact, it ranked as the twelve driest among 119 years of record. Now that we are well into the fall season, everyone is beginning to wonder what the upcoming winter may be like. And believe it or not, trends in September precipitation can help provide hints at what the start of the meteorological winter may bring. Below is a table which summarizes the top ten driest Septembers for Pennsylvania, and then displays the corresponding temperature data for the December that immediately follows.

Ten Driest Septembers (1-10)	December Temp Ranking (same year)	Categorization
1: 1943	29 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Below Average
2: 1914	20 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Below Average
3: 1941	102 <sup>nd</sup> coldest	Much Above Average
4: 1908	58 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Average
5: 1932	Tied 73 <sup>rd</sup> coldest	Average
6: 1900	51 <sup>st</sup> coldest	Average
7: 1948	Tied 73 <sup>rd</sup> coldest	Average
8: 1898	36 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Below Average
9: 1922	54 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Average
10: 1984	115 <sup>th</sup> coldest	Much Above Average

Given the number of years on record, the 59<sup>th</sup> ranking here is considered the median value, with the range of 'normal' being defined as any December from the 44<sup>th</sup> coldest to the 73<sup>rd</sup> coldest. As you can see, based on the top ten dry Septembers, there is a trend for Decembers of the same year to be around, or above average in temperature. Three years out of ten did experience below average, to almost well below normal temperatures, but these were also in the earlier half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our most recent year with a top-ten dry September, 1984, went on to see the 5<sup>th</sup> warmest December on record, with a monthly temperature anomaly of +7.3° Fahrenheit! So while many factors go into predicting temperature trends in the future, based on these statistics, one would favor an ease into the winter season, given that we just had a fairly dry September in Pennsylvania.