

Midwest Significant Events – June - August 2026

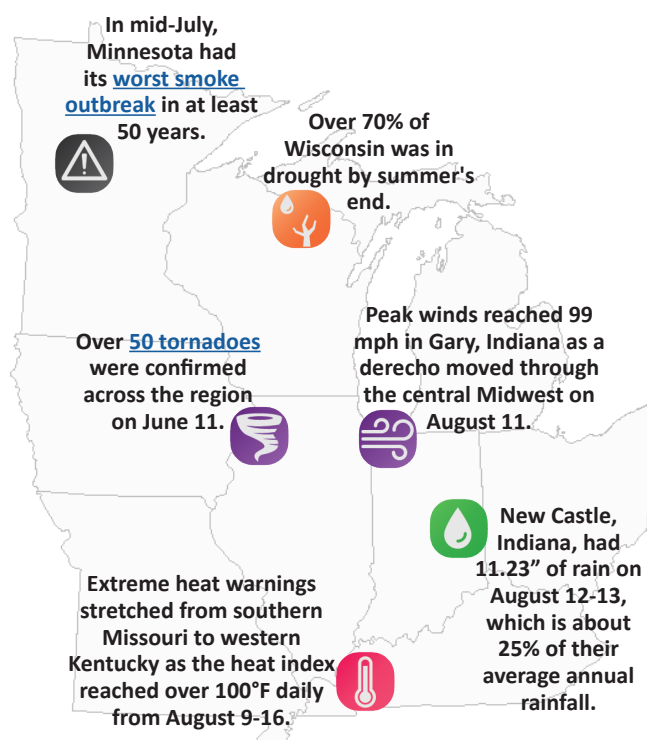
Summer brought several extreme events, including severe weather, heat, and flooding. Tornado outbreaks affected the central region on June 11, [17](#), and [21](#). Large windstorms (derechos) occurred on June 10 and August 11.

Significant flash flooding affected southern Indiana and western Kentucky after 4-10" of rain fell on June 26-28. From July 2-4, 5-10" of rain and flooding affected central Iowa, southeast Minnesota, and northern Illinois. July 9-11 brought 5-11" of rain and flash flooding to the south-central region and Missouri. Eastern Indiana received 6-12" of rainfall from August 12-13, resulting in deadly flooding.

Wildfire smoke caused very unhealthy to hazardous air quality across the upper and central Midwest from July 14-18.

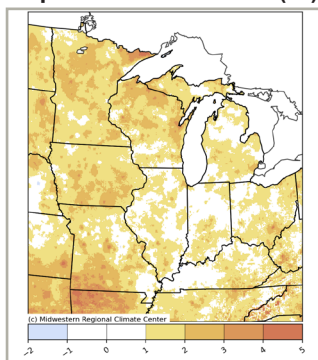
Humid heatwaves blanketed portions of the Midwest several times this summer. Kentucky had multiple instances where the dew point temperature reached 80-85°F (considered [oppressive](#)). Wisconsin had its 5th most humid July since 1979.

Compound effects of year-over-year rainfall deficits and short-term deficits escalated drought in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and southern Missouri during the latter half of the summer.



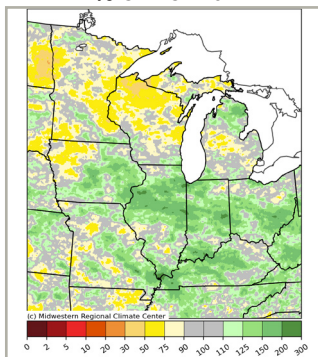
Regional Climate Overview – June - August 2026

Summer Temperature Departure from Normal (°F)



The Midwest had its 24th warmest summer. Minnesota had its 12th warmest summer. Summer temperatures were above normal in the western half of the region and near-to slightly above-normal in the eastern half (top-left map). Conditions were variable month to month, with June near normal region wide, July above normal for most places, and August a mix of normal and above normal. Summer minimum temperatures were notable, with the Midwest having its 7th warmest minimum temperatures on record.

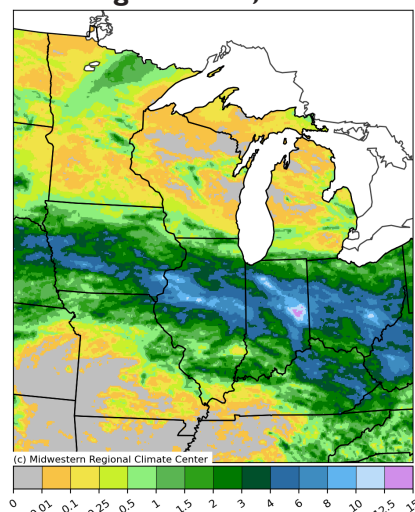
Summer Precipitation % of Normal



Region wide, summer ranked the 27th wettest. Indiana had its 5th wettest summer, and Illinois had its 10th wettest. Summer precipitation was above normal in the central and southeastern Midwest and below normal in the northwest (bottom-left map). June and August generally had above-normal precipitation, while July was drier-than-normal for much of the region. Indiana and Ohio had their wettest August on record. Fifty-four counties across Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio had their wettest August mainly driven by rainfall from August 11-17 (bottom-right map).

Illinois' active tornado year continued into summer, with 80 confirmed tornadoes across the state in June alone. From January-August, Illinois had [210 tornadoes](#), which beat the previous annual record (set in 2024) by 68. Minnesota recorded no tornadoes in August, which hasn't happened since 2011.

Rainfall Totals August 11-17, 2026



Regional Impacts – June - August 2026

Deadly Flooding

On June 28, 6-10" fell across western Kentucky, resulting in [flash flooding](#) that washed away roads and buildings and [killed at least four](#) people.

From Aug. 11-17, repeated storms left a swath of 6-14" of rain from Iowa to Ohio. East-central [Indiana](#) was at the epicenter of the flood disaster resulting from a 1000-year rainfall event, with at least [7 fatalities](#), major damage to roads and [bridges](#), and flooded neighborhoods and homes requiring [evacuations](#) and rescues.



Smoky skies in downtown Chicago on July 16 (Credit: Alicia Pearson)

Agriculture

Summer heat and/or drought pushed row crops to earlier maturity. Excessive wetness in the central Corn Belt reduced nitrogen in the soil, resulting in crop stress. Livestock faced increased heat stress due to elevated humidity. In Wisconsin and Minnesota, failing corn crops were chopped for silage, dairy operators were hauling water, and livestock required supplemental feed. Forage reductions and livestock stress affected southern Missouri.

Extreme Weather

Winds of [70-100 mph](#) left a wide path of damage from eastern Iowa into Indiana on August 11. About [600,000](#) customers lost power in Illinois and [400,000](#) customers in northern Indiana, with about 20,000 customers in [Gary lacking power](#) for two full weeks. In Portage (IN), forested areas



Near Columbus, OH, flooding [closed I-70](#) on Aug 20-21 (Credit: ODOT)

lost more than 80% of their tree canopy. One fatality was attributed to this derecho.

Drought

Low river, lake, and reservoir levels in Wisconsin resulted in [reduced hydropower generation](#) and limited boat ramp access. There were concerns about water access and availability for municipal uses in Minnesota. The Boundary Waters fire in northern Minnesota burned for two months, claiming [71,000 acres](#), forcing [evacuations](#), and reducing regional [air quality](#).

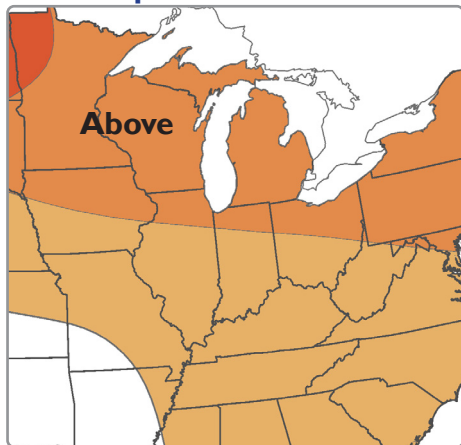
Regional Outlook – October - December 2026

NOAA forecasters [are predicting](#) an increased chance of above-normal temperatures in the Midwest, with stronger chances further north. The outlook shows a slight chance of below-normal precipitation in the central Great Lakes, a slight chance of above-normal precipitation in the southwest portion of the region, and equal chances of above-, below-, or near-normal precipitation across the central Midwest.

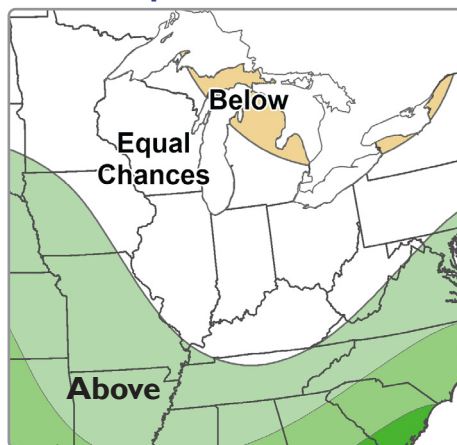
[Drought](#) is expected to persist in the far upper Midwest. There is an above-normal [risk of wildfires](#) in northern Minnesota and northern Wisconsin during October. In wet areas, saturated soils and slow fall harvest are a concern.

[El Niño](#) conditions have strengthened, and there is a 90% chance of a very strong event in fall and winter. In drought-affected northern areas, concerns for the fall season include municipal water availability and soil moisture recharge. In wetter areas in the central and southern Midwest, El Niño-related concerns are highly variable and uncertain depending on when and where large-scale weather patterns become established. Hazards can be wide-ranging.

Temperature Outlook



Precipitation Outlook



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