



## Record Wet Start to the Year in the Midwest

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Sources: Molly Woloszyn, Extension Climatologist – (217) 244-7612, [mollyw@illinois.edu](mailto:mollyw@illinois.edu)  
Mike Timlin, Regional Climatologist – (217) 333-8506, [mtimlin@illinois.edu](mailto:mtimlin@illinois.edu)

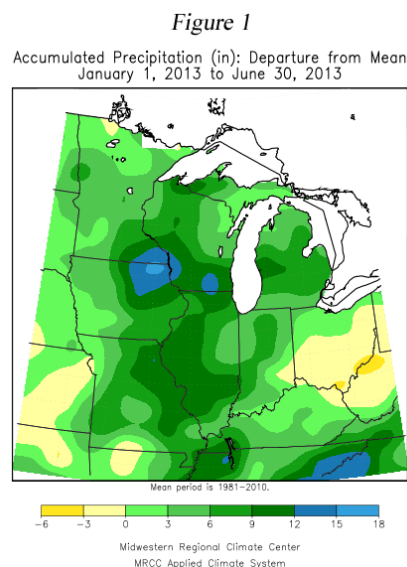
Editor: Lisa Sheppard – (217) 244-7270, [sheppard@illinois.edu](mailto:sheppard@illinois.edu)

Following the drought-stricken 2012, the first six months of 2013 are off to a record wet start in much of the Midwest. Year-to-date regional precipitation totals rank as the wettest January-to-June period on record (records start in 1895) for the Midwest as a whole, according to the Midwestern Regional Climate Center (<http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu>) at the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS).

Region-wide precipitation for the Midwest for January through June 2013 is 23.71 inches, which is just over six inches above normal. This is a large difference from last year, when Midwest January-to-June precipitation ranked the 18<sup>th</sup> driest with only 14.82 inches during the first half of the year.

Statewide values also ranked as the wettest in Illinois (29.11 inches), Iowa (24.93 inches), Michigan (20.80 inches), and Wisconsin (21.85 inches). Three additional states, Minnesota (3<sup>rd</sup>), Indiana (8<sup>th</sup>), and Missouri (9<sup>th</sup>), ranked among the top 10 wettest on record. Kentucky ranked as the 27<sup>th</sup> wettest while Ohio ranked as the median value (60<sup>th</sup>) in the 119-year record.

Portions of the upper Midwest experienced January-to-June precipitation that was 12 to 18 inches above normal (figure 1). Harmony, Minnesota received 34.13 inches through June of this year, which broke the previous January-to-June precipitation record by over 9 inches (records start in 1940). Cresco, Iowa also broke its previous January-to-June precipitation record by 8.16 inches this year when 33.41 inches were recorded (records start in 1937).



Drought conditions have improved significantly across the Midwest because of the above normal precipitation so far this year. At the beginning of 2013, more than 50 percent of the region was being affected by some level of drought on the U.S. Drought Monitor. As of July 2, 2013, only a small portion in Minnesota remains in drought (representing less than 1 percent of the region). Other impacts include several United States Geological Survey stream gages along rivers in the Midwest that were at or above their flood stage in early May after a very wet April. In addition, spring precipitation delayed planting of corn and soybean crops across the region at the beginning of the growing season. However, more favorable weather conditions in May allowed farmers to plant rapidly, and by the end of May, much of the planting progressed to normal amounts for the time of year.

A year has made a big difference in terms of precipitation for the Midwest. At this time last year, Illinois and Indiana had just experienced their 6<sup>th</sup> driest January-to-June period on record. In fact, Iowa statewide precipitation for January to June 2013 was only 0.59 inches behind the 2012 annual total (25.52 inches). Similarly, in Illinois, January to June 2013 was just 1.23 inches behind the 2012 total (30.34 inches).