

Southeast Region: (Information provided by the Southeast Regional Climate Center)

- Temperatures were near to below average across much of the Southeast region for the month of January. Monthly mean temperatures were within 2 degrees F (1.1 degrees C) of average for over 59 percent of the 209 long-term (i.e., period of record equaling or exceeding 50 years) stations across the region. Consequently, there were no long-term stations that observed their warmest or coldest January on record. However, Covington, VA (1966-2022; at 3.4 degrees F (1.9 degrees C) below normal) observed its fifth coldest January on record. Maximum temperatures ranged from 2.6 degrees F (1.4 degrees C) above normal in Aibonito, PR (1955-2022) to 4.5 degrees F (2.5 degrees C) below normal in Concord, NC (1936-2022). Daily temperature minimums ranged from 1.4 degrees F (0.8 degree C) above normal in Orlando, FL (1896-2022) to 5.2 degrees F (2.9 degrees C) below normal in Harrisonburg, VA (1894-2022). The first two days of the year were exceptionally warm, with much of the region recording mean temperatures more than 20 degrees F (11.1 degrees C) above normal. Daily maximum temperatures exceeded 70 degrees F (21 degrees C) across portions of every state. There were 88 long-term stations that observed a daily maximum temperature record on the 1st, including Norfolk, VA (1871-2022) at 76 degrees F (24 degrees C) and Macon, GA (1892-2022) at 82 degrees F (28 degrees C). Montgomery, AL (1872-2022), reported the highest daily maximum temperature in the region (excluding Florida and Puerto Rico) for the event at 83 degrees F (28 degrees C), which tied for its warmest January day on record. In contrast, the coldest weather of the month across the Southeast occurred on the 29th through the 30th, as the circulation around a departing mid-latitude cyclone ushered in frigid air from Canada. Daily minimum temperatures fell below 20 degrees F (-6.7 degrees C) across portions of every state including Florida. Parts of southern Florida, including Miami, experienced frost conditions. Some locations in the higher elevations of North Carolina and Virginia fell below 0 degrees F (-17.8 degrees C), including Mt Mitchell (1925-2022) with a minimum temperature of -2 degrees F (-18.9 degrees C).
- Precipitation was variable across much the Southeast region for January, with a few wet and dry extremes reported. The driest locations were found across much of Florida, Alabama, Georgia and Puerto Rico. Monthly precipitation totals ranged from 70 to less than 25 percent of normal across these locations. Sarasota, FL (1918-2022) only observed 0.44 inches (11 mm) of precipitation, more than 2.3 inches (58 mm) below normal, and Juncos, PR (1940-2022) observed its 8th driest January at only 1.2 inches (30 mm) of precipitation. In contrast, the wettest locations for the month were located across eastern North Carolina and Virginia. Precipitation totals ranged from 100 to 200 percent of normal. Cape Hatteras, NC (1874-2022) measured 7.1 inches (180 mm) of precipitation for the month, over 2 inches (51 mm) above normal, and Wallops Island, VA (1966-2022) observed its 6th wettest January at 5.24 inches (133 mm) of precipitation. A few low-pressure systems brought snowfall to the Southeast region throughout the month. After record warmth on the 1st and 2nd, a strong low-pressure system and accompanied cold front brought snow as far south as the Florida Panhandle. As the system moved northeastward, snowfall rates of 1-2 inches (25-51 mm) per hour were observed in parts of Virginia, leading to nearly 450,000 residents to lose power. The heavy wet snow was also responsible for a closure of a portion of I-95 in Caroline County, VA that lasted over 24 hours. Another low-pressure system moved northeastward through the region on January 16th -17th. This storm brought over 10 inches (254 mm) of snow to Germany Valley, GA and caused approximately 100,000 customers to lose power. Parts of U.S. Route 276 in North Carolina had to close due to icing. The North Carolina Highway Patrol responded to approximately 200 collisions across the state, including a car crash with two fatalities in Raleigh, NC. A low-pressure system that developed along the coast of South Carolina, brought 3 inches (76 mm) of snow to Chesterfield, SC, 5 inches (127 mm) of snow to Elizabeth City, NC, and 6.7 inches (170 mm) of snow to Norfolk, VA,

January 21st-22nd. Ice storm warnings were issued for the coastal cities of Myrtle Beach, SC and Wilmington, NC. This was the first ice storm warning the Weather Service office in Wilmington has issued since 2015. Ice accumulations of a quarter inch were reported, along with many downed trees and over a thousand power outages. On January 28th, an area of low pressure developed off the Southeast coast near Florida. This system strengthened rapidly as it moved north, producing wintery precipitation across the Southeast. Over 9 inches (229 mm) of snow fell in Wallops Island, VA and 10 inches (254 mm) in Mt. Mitchell, NC. As a result of these systems, a few places in the Southeast observed or tied their top ten counts of snow days for January, including Danville, VA at 8 days (tied for 3rd), Columbia, SC at 5 days (tied for 5th) and Raleigh, NC at 8 days (tied for 10th). The most snowfall for the month was observed in Beech Mountain, NC at 49.5 inches (1257 mm) of snow, which is its 5th highest January total since 1991.

- There were 113 reports of severe weather across the Southeast during January, which is 198 percent of the median monthly frequency of 57 reports during 2000-2019. There were 17 confirmed tornadoes reported for the month (12 EF-0, 4 EF-1 and 1 EF-2), which is 243 percent of the monthly average of seven. The strongest tornado occurred in Lee County, FL on January 16th and was rated EF-2, with winds of 118 mph (53 m/s). This tornado began as a waterspout in the Gulf of Mexico and moved onshore through the Fort Myers area. The tornado caused 3 injuries and damaged over 100 manufactured homes, with 30 being destroyed. Another tornado, associated with a squall line, occurred in Butler County, AL on January 9th. This tornado had winds of 75 mph (34 m/s) and snapped several trees. No injuries or fatalities were reported. There were 3 reports of hail for the month, with the largest being hen-egg sized (2.00 inches) in St. Lucie County, FL on January 10th. Several cars were banged up and damaged from the hail, but no injuries were reported. There were 91 wind reports for the month, which is 190 percent of the average (48 reports). Straight line winds up to 100 mph (45 m/s) were observed in Butler County, AL on January 9th, with significant tree damage. No injuries were reported.
- Overall drought conditions improved across the Southeast region except Puerto Rico in January. At the beginning of the month, a swath of severe drought (D2) stretched from northeastern North Carolina southwestward down to South Carolina, with a pocket of severe drought (D2) near the North Carolina/Virginia border. Moderate drought (D1) and abnormally dry conditions (D0) ringed the area of severe drought. By the end of the month, the severe drought (D2) was gone from the region. An area of abnormally dry conditions (D0) with pockets of moderate drought (D1) remained in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and the western part of Alabama. Drought expanded across Puerto Rico for the month, with much of the island in moderate drought (D1) ringed by abnormally dry conditions (D0) and pockets of severe drought (D2) and extreme drought (D3) across the Virgin Islands. Farmers in the citrus growing region of Florida had to run irrigation due to dry conditions. Frost and freezing temperatures experienced toward the end of the month impacted row crop production throughout the state. Damage assessments are still underway, but producers are optimistic that sugarcane will recover from cold injury given some time. The cool nights and warm day temperature swings in Georgia caused some respiratory issues in cattle. Some farmers in Alabama reported damage to strawberry crops due to freezing temperatures. Diminishing forages and snowfall in South Carolina caused some farmers to begin feeding hay. Although cold temperatures were reported throughout January, strawberries remained in good condition.