

# How's the Weather in the Garden State?

## Exploring Current Weather and Drought Conditions Data

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State and federal websites are available to assess recent trends in temperature, precipitation, and drought status for New Jersey. In particular, data describing recent *weather* can be compared with 30-year normal values to contrast recent weather with the more typical *climate* we experience in New Jersey.

### How cold was it this winter?

One thing maybe we can all agree upon: This winter *felt* unusually cold, snowy, and icy. Or, perhaps for some, a callback to past weather patterns.

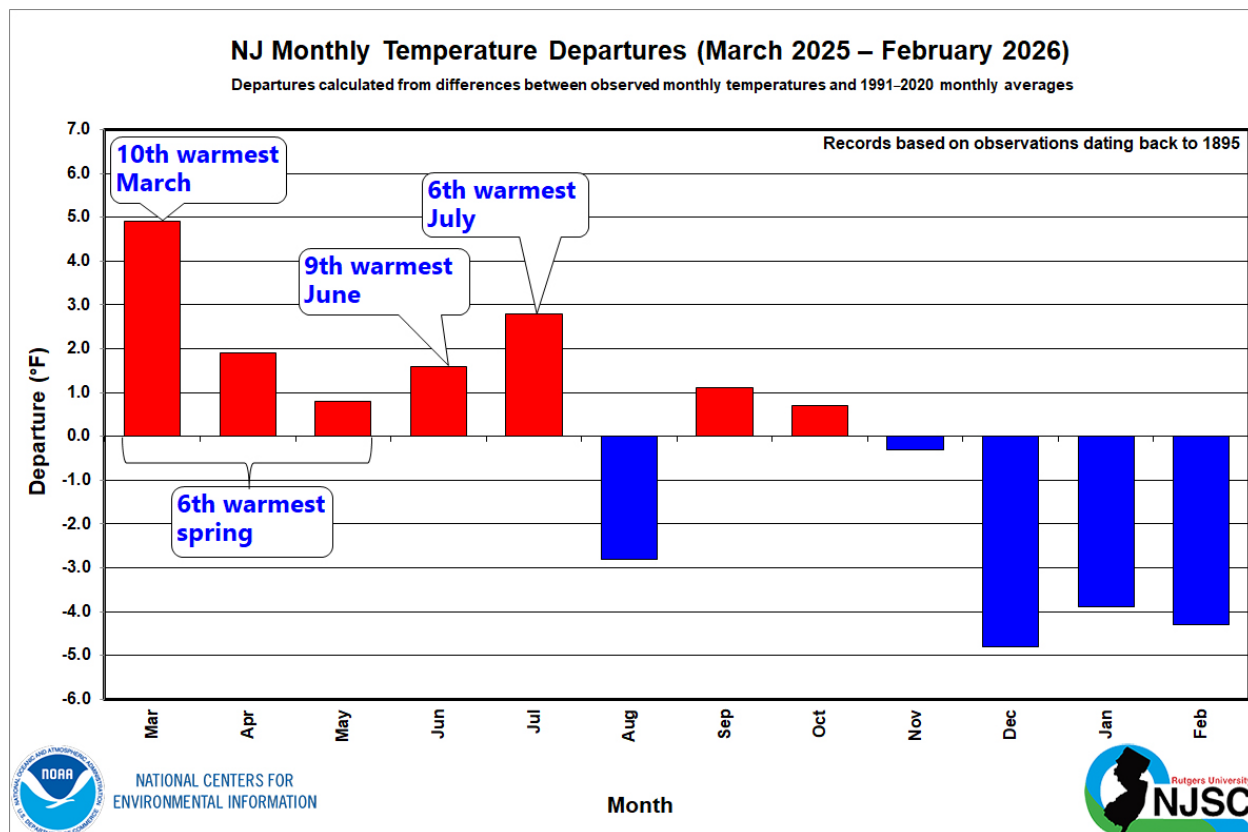


Figure 1. Source: Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist, [climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/](https://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/).

### ***Temperature departures from 30-year normals***

One method we use to assess current weather conditions is to compare them with 30-year normal values. Figure 1 shows recent average monthly temperatures in New Jersey compared with 30-year normal values, where the 30-year normal values are based on values from the years 1991 to 2020.

To focus on this past winter, all of December, January, and February were about 4 or 5 °F below normal values. This is about the usual difference in winter temperatures between Trenton, NJ and Hartford, CT.

A few things to note. This is just an average across all days of the month. It doesn't highlight unusually cold days in the month, or unusual low temperatures if they were balanced with unusual high temperatures. Also, this comparison is to normal temperature values from the years 1991 to 2020. If climate patterns have changed since the 1990's, our recent winter may have been more different than those in the 2020's, but less different than those in the 1990's.

As a side note, temperatures in the spring and early summer of 2025 were higher than normal, perhaps highlighting the change from the summer to the winter for us living through it.

### ***Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist***

These data come from the Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist website ([climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/](http://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/)), which is an excellent website for precipitation and temperature deviations from 30-year normals, as well as current conditions.

### **What's the state of the drought?**

#### ***drought.gov***

*Drought.gov* ([www.drought.gov/](http://www.drought.gov/)) is a federal government website from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Integrated Drought Information System. It's useful for investigating drought conditions across the United States, or for individual states, with a simple interactive map.

At the time of writing, *drought.gov* identifies "moderate drought" in southwest New Jersey and in and around Sussex County. The remainder of the rest of the state is listed as "abnormally dry" (Figure 2). The map lists 78% of New Jersey as "abnormally dry" and 22% as "moderate drought".

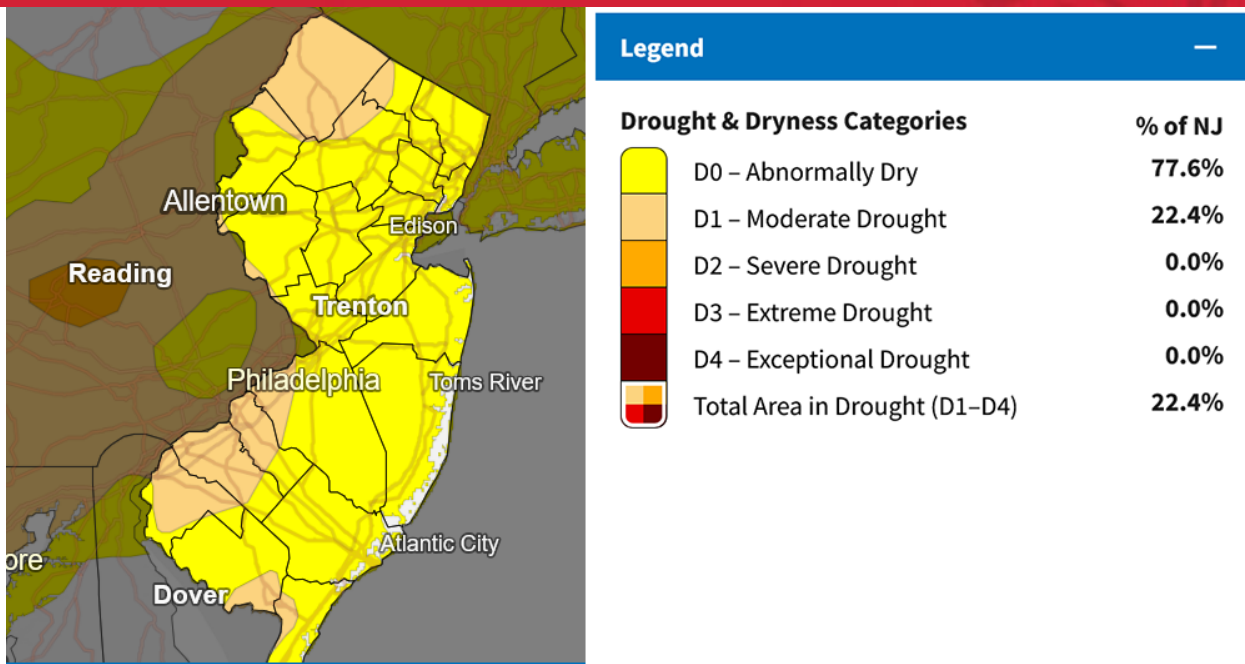

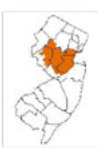

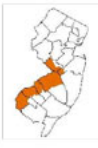




Figure 2. Source: drought.gov, Current New Jersey Drought Map, [www.drought.gov/states/new-jersey#current-conditions](http://www.drought.gov/states/new-jersey#current-conditions).

### ***NJDEP's Drought Status and Conditions website***

The NJDEP *Drought Status and Conditions* website ([dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/](http://dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/)) provides a little more detail as to the specific drought conditions in different regions of New Jersey. Specifically, it gives ratings for recent precipitation, stream flow, reservoir levels, and unconfined aquifer groundwater status. (Figure 3).

- At the time of writing, in terms of overall water supply status for New Jersey, the site gives a rating of “warning”, and notes that this status has been in place for 17 weeks
- For 90-day precipitation, different regions of the state range from “severely dry” to “moderately dry”.
- 90-day streamflow is listed as “severely dry” in most regions, with the designation “extremely dry” in the Coastal South area of the state (including Cumberland, Cape May, and Atlantic Counties).
- Unconfined aquifer groundwater status is listed as “severely dry” in the south of the state, and “moderately dry” in the north of the state.
- The status of reservoirs varies, with Delaware River reservoirs listed as “near or above normal”, but other New Jersey reservoirs listed as “moderately dry” or “severely dry”.

NEW JERSEY Regional Drinking-Water-Supply Indicators & Declared Water-Supply Status				March 29, 2026				
Region	Status	Drinking-Water-Supply Indicator					Water-Supply Status	
		90-day precipitation	90-day stream-flow	N.J. reservoirs	Del. R. reservoirs	Unconf ground water		
North-west 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.			Normal	
	Moderately dry						Watch	
	Severely dry						Warning	
	Extremely dry						Emergency	
Central 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.			Normal	
	Moderately dry						Watch	
	Severely dry							Warning
	Extremely dry							Emergency
North-east 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.			Normal	
	Moderately dry						Watch	
	Severely dry						Warning	
	Extremely dry						Emergency	
South-west 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.			Normal	
	Moderately dry						Watch	
	Severely dry						Warning	
	Extremely dry						Emergency	
Coastal North 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.			Normal	
	Moderately dry						Watch	
	Severely dry						Warning	
	Extremely dry						Emergency	
Coastal South 	Near or above normal			Not a significant region-wide water resource.	Not a significant region-wide water resource.		Normal	
	Moderately dry							Watch
	Severely dry							Warning
	Extremely dry							Emergency

The number in each colored dot is the number of weeks the specific indicator in that region has been in that status. For indicators which changed status this evaluation cycle the arrow indicates the direction of change; it points from the previous status to the current. A water drop (●) means the indicator has been green for more than a year.

Figure 3. Source: NJDEP, Drought Status and Conditions, [dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/](http://dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/).

**Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist**

The Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist website also shows precipitation deviations from 30-year normals. Here, with the exception of May 2025 and July 2025, each month from March 2025 to February 2026 shows lower precipitation totals than normal precipitation values from the years 1991 to 2020, often between about 1 and 2 inches per month below normal.

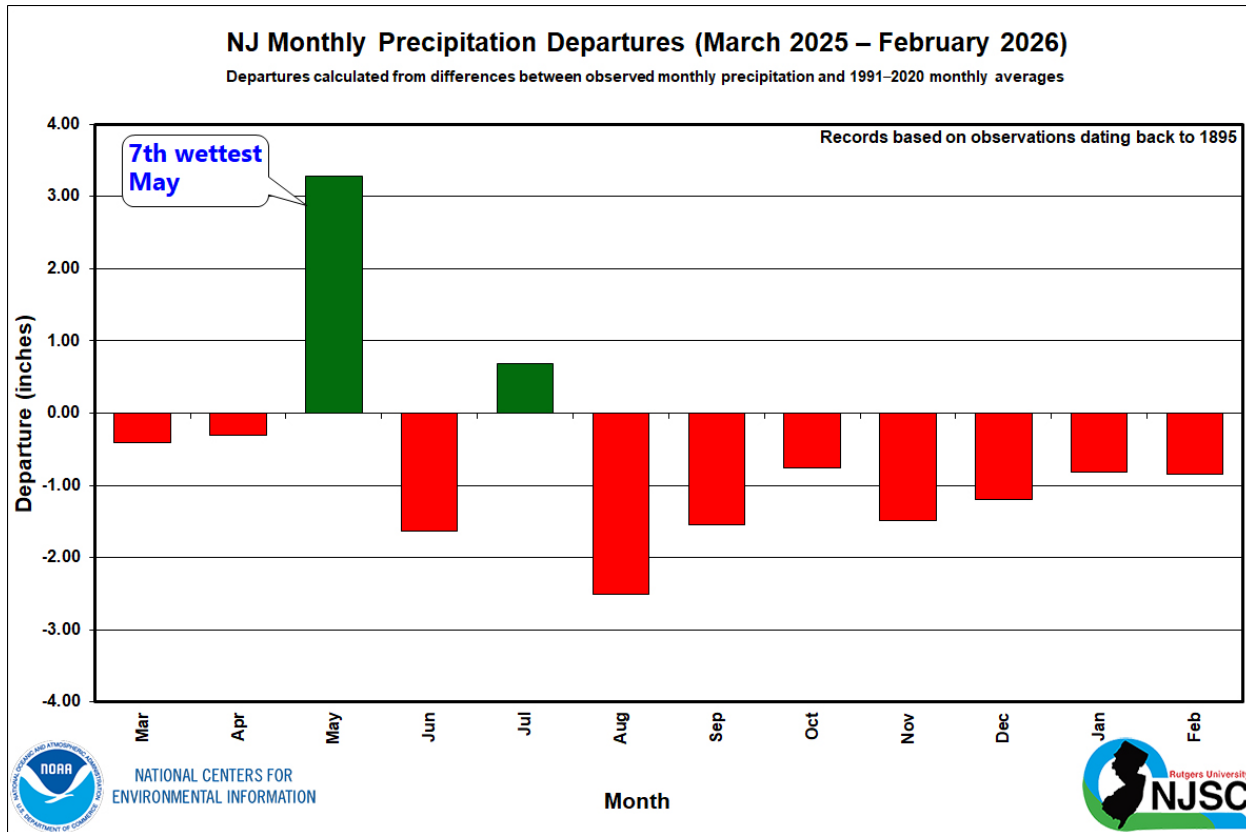


Figure 4. Source: Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist, [climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/](http://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/).

**National Weather Service New Jersey 180 Day Precipitation Departures Webpage**

The National Weather Service New Jersey 180 Day Precipitation Departures webpage ([www.weather.gov/marfc/NJPrecipitation180Day](http://www.weather.gov/marfc/NJPrecipitation180Day)) has a simple map of New Jersey Counties and the precipitation deviations from normal values. There are options to change the timeframe from the last 180 days to the last 90 days, 30 days, 7 days, or 365 days.

At the time of writing, the map shows that most counties are 11% to 25% below normal for the last 180 days (from April 5, 2026). This corresponds to a deficit of 2.4 to 4.9 inches across these counties. The exception here is Ocean County, which is closer to normal, with only a 1.4 inch precipitation deficit over the last 180 days.



## Resources

Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist. [climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/](https://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/).

National Weather Service, New Jersey 180 Day Precipitation Departures.  
[www.weather.gov/marfc/NJPrecipitation180Day](https://www.weather.gov/marfc/NJPrecipitation180Day).

NJDEP, Drought Status and Conditions. [dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/](https://dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/).

Drought.gov, Current New Jersey Drought Map. [www.drought.gov/states/new-jersey#current-conditions](https://www.drought.gov/states/new-jersey#current-conditions).