

# North Dakota Monthly Climate Summary

## January 2026

Volume 20. No. 1

# NORTH DAKOTA STATE CLIMATE OFFICE



# January 2026



*Optical effects were commonly seen throughout January*

January was roughly split between a mild, dry first half and a cold, dry second half. Early in the month, well-above-average temperatures prevailed across the region as Pacific air moved across the Northern Plains. In contrast, the latter half of January brought well-below-average temperatures as Arctic air took hold over much of the Eastern United States. Overall, the milder air had a greater influence, leading to above-average monthly temperatures for much of central and western North Dakota. Eastern and northeastern portions of the state ended up near average or slightly below average.

With only a few exceptions, much of North Dakota experienced drier-than-average conditions in January. The limited precipitation that did occur came primarily from Alberta Clipper systems, which have been the dominant weather feature across the state since early December.



Figure 1: The year kicked off to a frosty start as rime frost took over Western North Dakota for days in early January

## Precipitation Summary

**January 2026 Statewide Average Precipitation: 0.28"**

Percent of Normal Statewide Precipitation: 55%

January is already a dry month, averaging about a half inch of precipitation, but this January was especially dry. Eastern North Dakota was the driest part of the state, except along the extreme edges of the Canadian border.

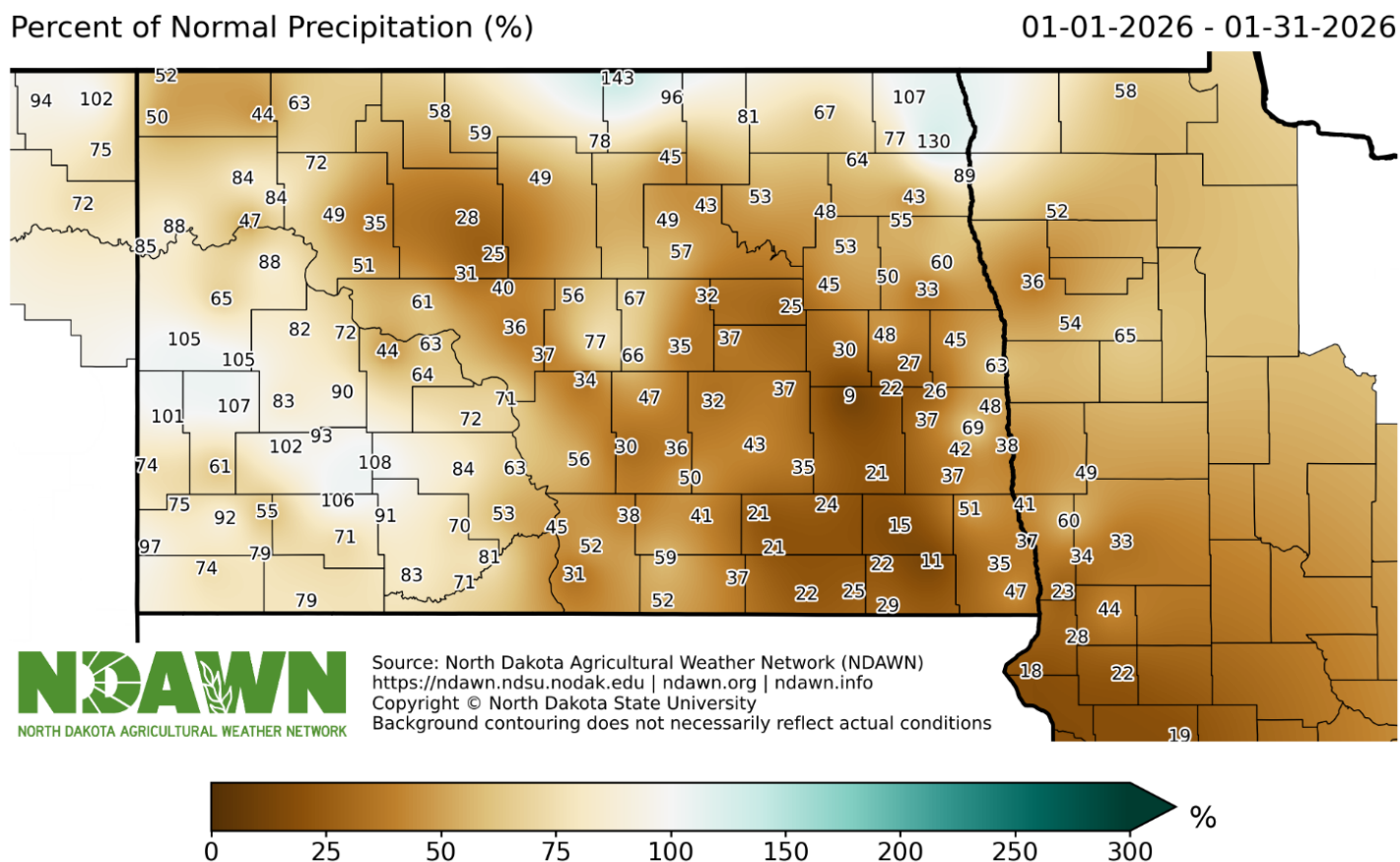


Figure 2: Percent of Average Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season precipitation gauges in January 2026



# Precipitation

3



The maximum monthly precipitation recorded by NDAWN in North Dakota during the month of January was 0.66 inches at the Peace Garden station in Rolette County. That was 143% of average. The minimum monthly precipitation recorded at NDAWN in North Dakota was at the Dazey 2E station with only 0.04 inches of precipitation, 9% of normal (Figure 3).

Total Precipitation (in)

01-01-2026 - 01-31-2026

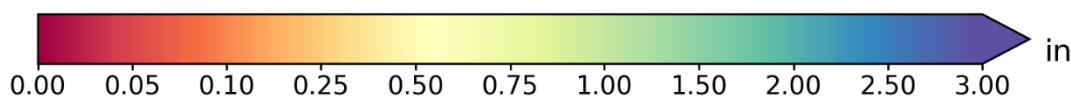
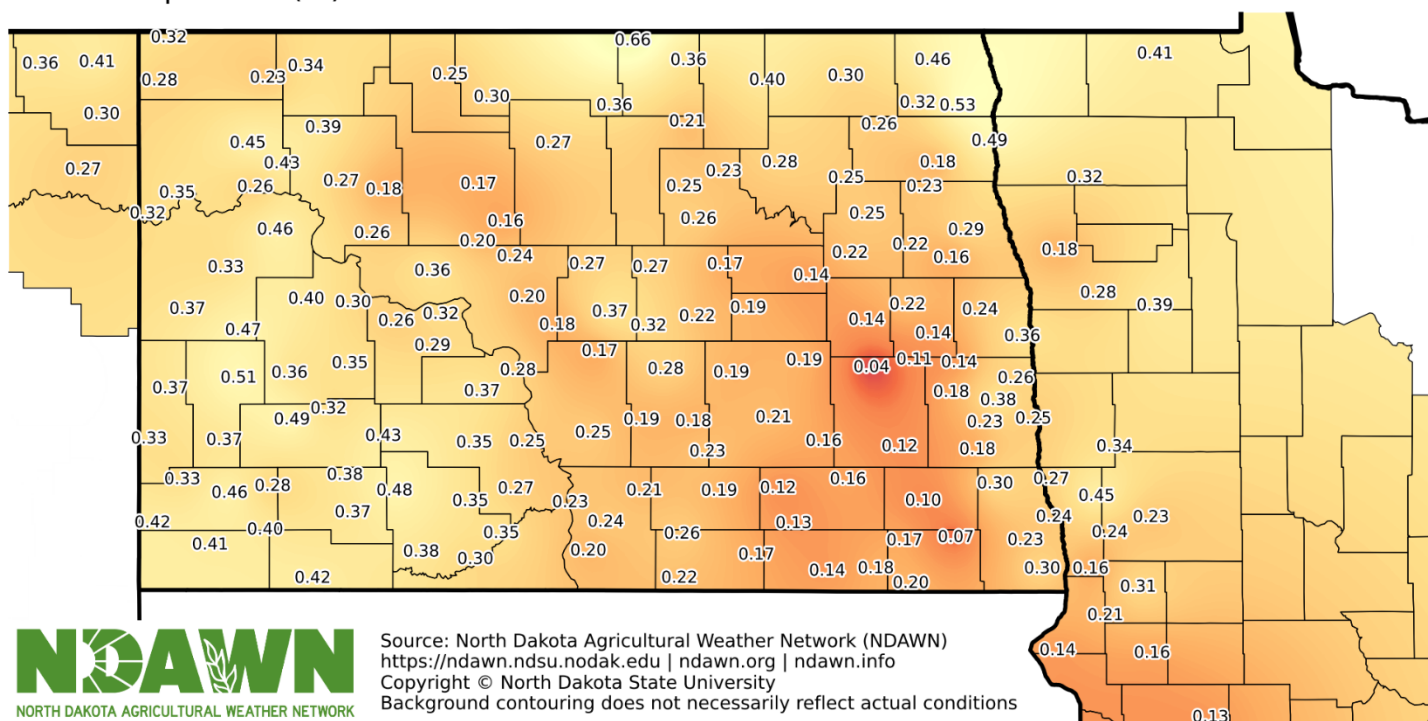


Figure 3: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season precipitation gauges in January 2026

# Precipitation

4



For the current water year (October 1 – January 31), southeast North Dakota remains dry, with most of the rest of the state well above average precipitation (Figure 4).

Percent of Normal Precipitation Since October 1 (%)

Feb 01 2026

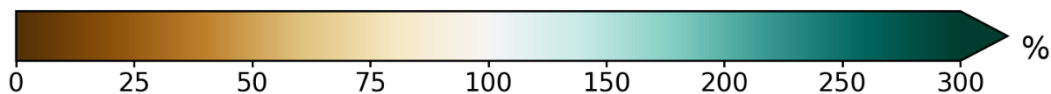
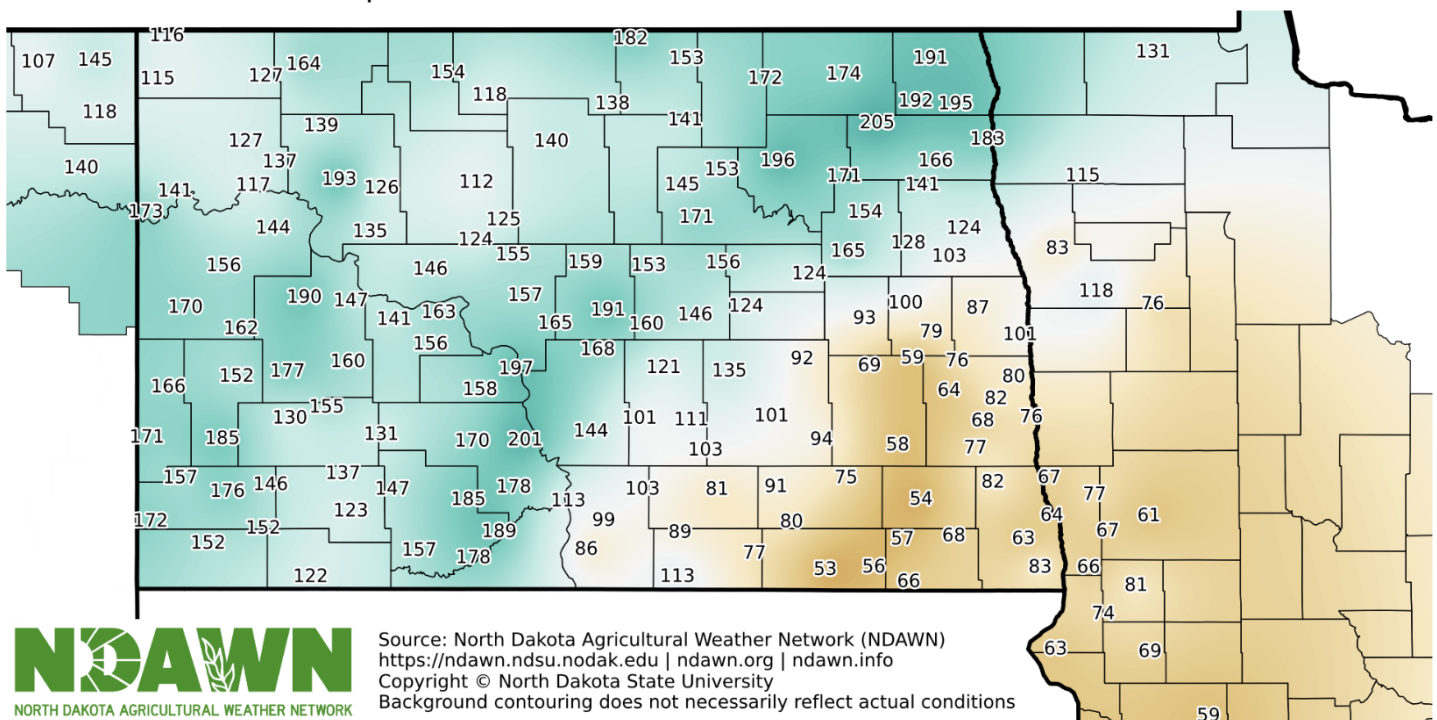


Figure 4: Percent of Average Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season for the current water year

# Precipitation

5



Frozen soils kept the drought monitor unchanged throughout January. (Figure 5).

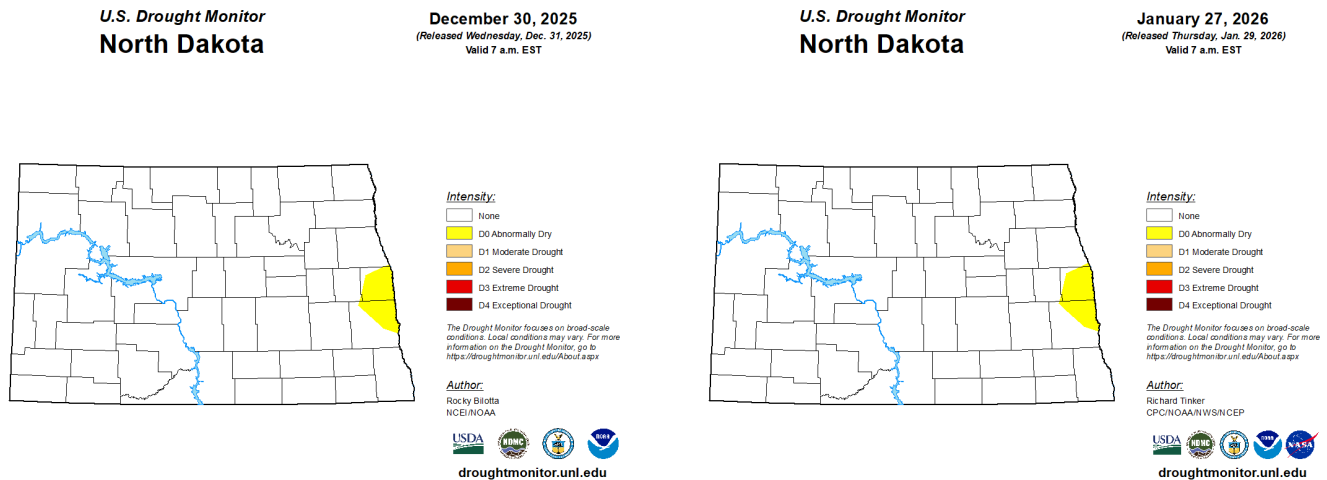


Figure 5: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions December 30, 2025 (left) and January 27, 2026 (right)

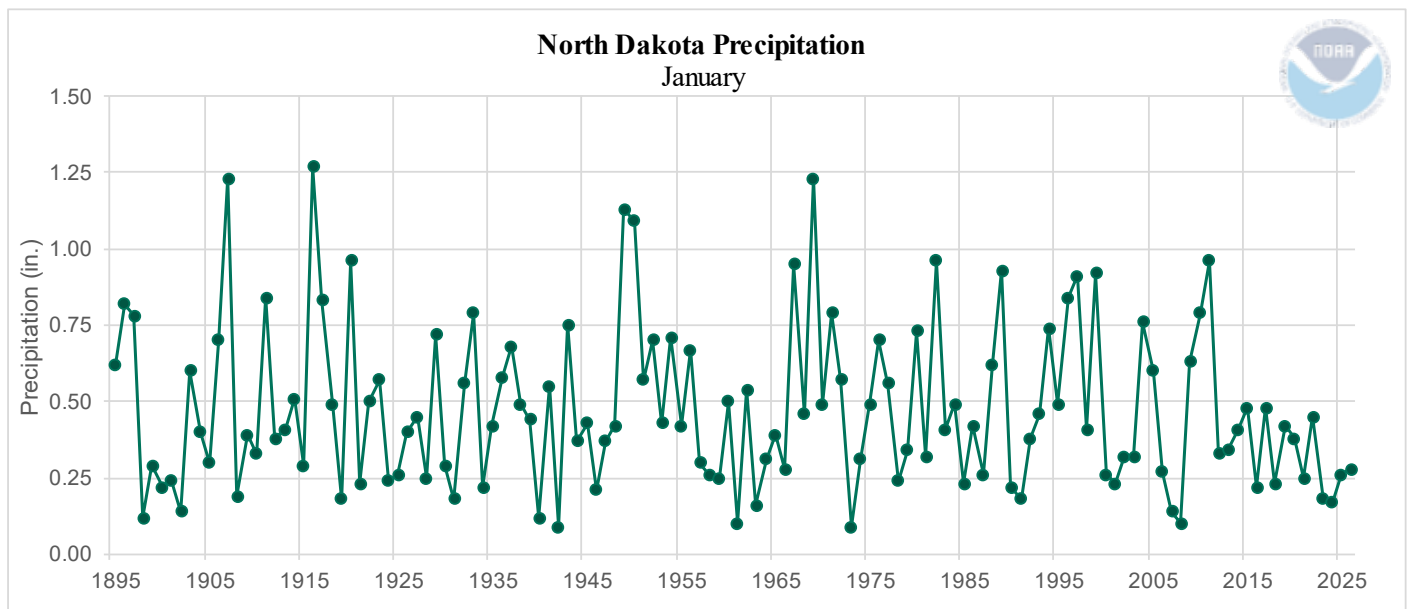


Figure 6: Average Statewide Total Precipitation in North Dakota for the month of January (via NCEI)



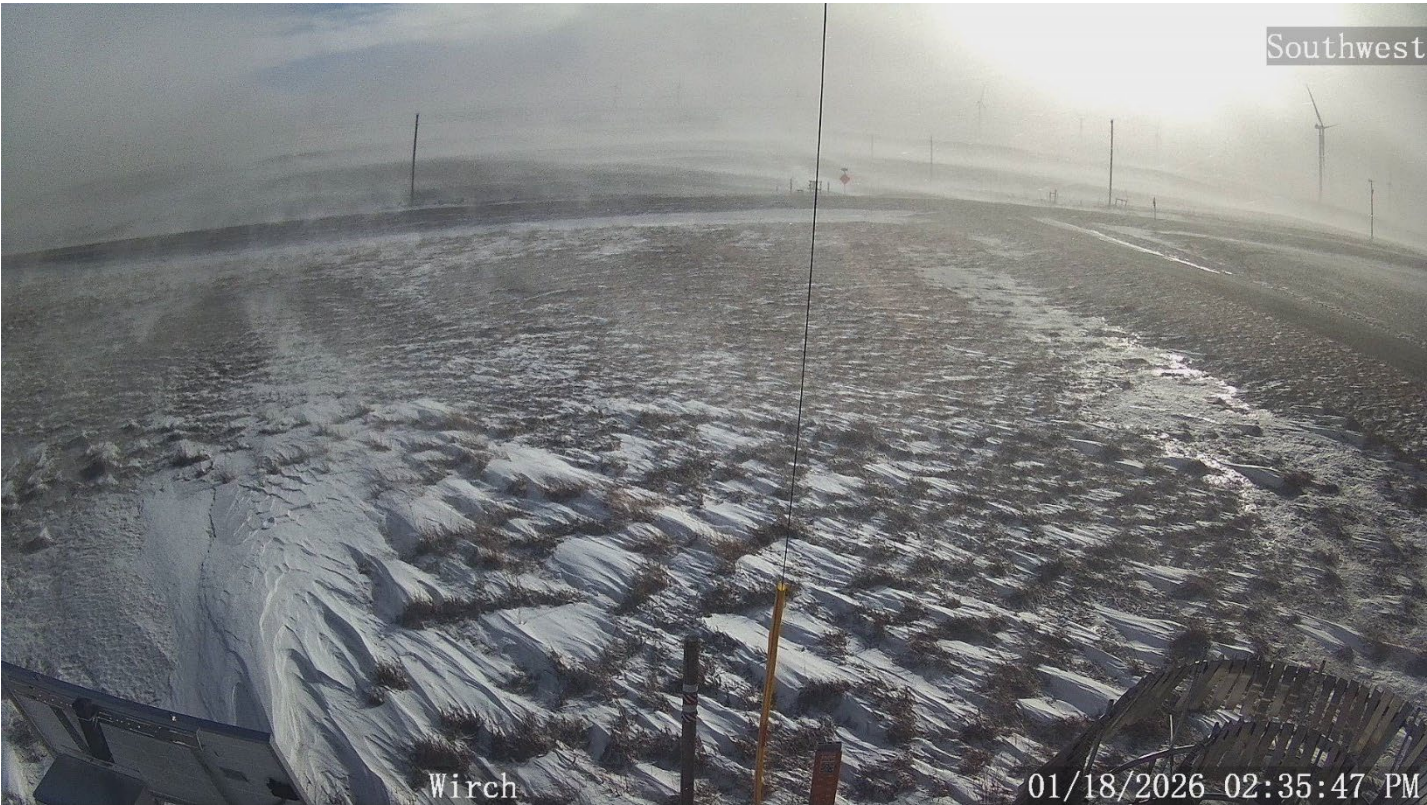


Figure 7: Strong winds produced localized blowing snow events throughout the month of January

## North Dakota January Precipitation Summary

	Precipitation	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record Year
January 2026	0.28"	0.51"	-0.23"	96th Wettest	1.27" (1916)
				38th Driest	0.09" (1942)

Table 1: January precipitation summary for North Dakota. 2026 statistics from NDAWN station data. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (1895-2026) (NOAA).

## Temperature Summary

### January 2026 Statewide Average Temperature: 11.9°F

Departure from Normal Statewide Temperature: 1.5°F above normal

Overall statewide, January was above average temperature-wise (Figure 8), however looking at a monthly map doesn't tell the whole story, as January was a tale of two halves. The first half of the month (January 1 – 15) was well above normal with an average temperature of 23.5°F (+13.0°F), whereas the second half (January 16 – 31) was well below normal with an average temperature of 1.1°F (-9.2°F) (Figure 9).

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F)

01-01-2026 - 01-31-2026

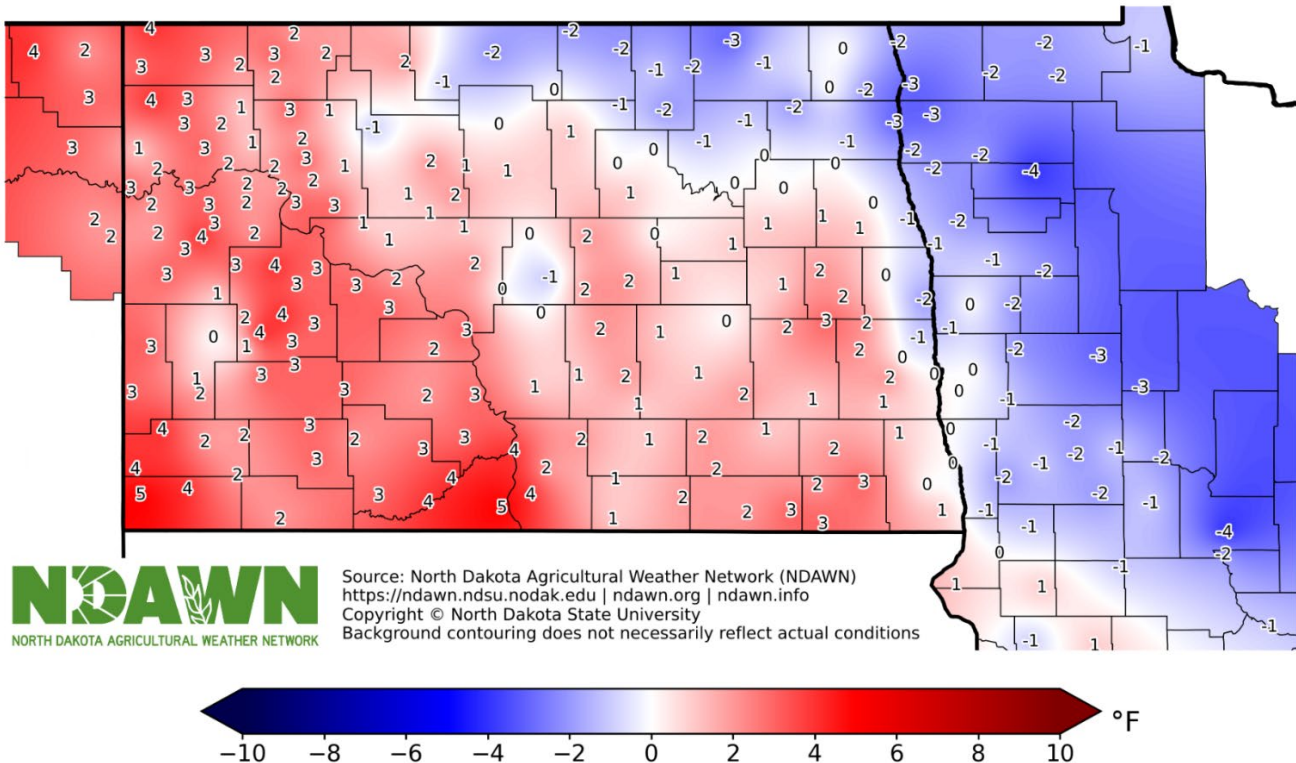


Figure 8: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in January 2026



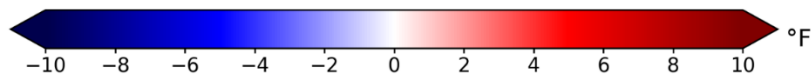
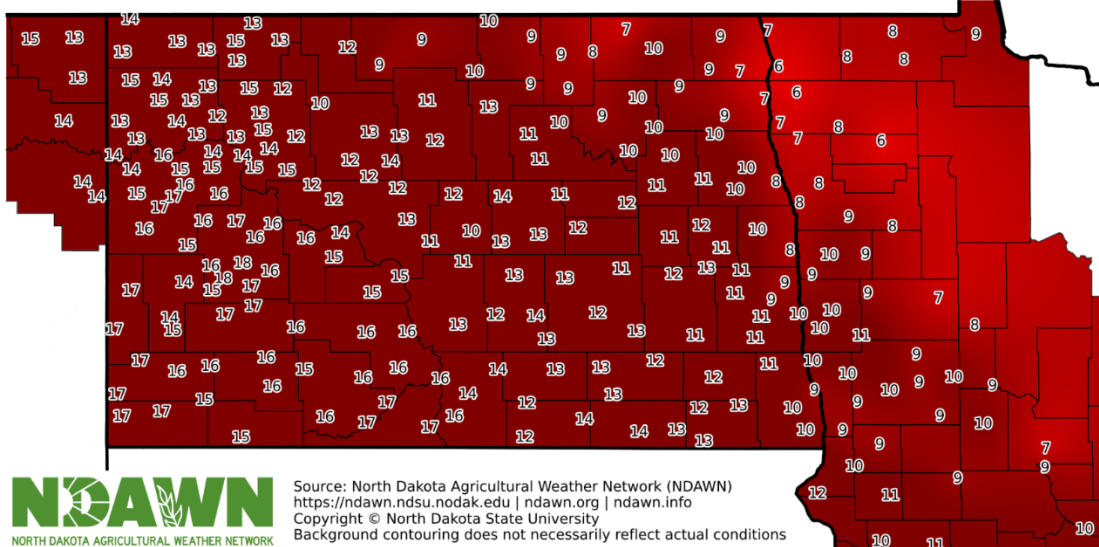
# Temperature

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Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F)

01-01-2026 - 01-15-2026



Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F)

01-16-2026 - 01-31-2026

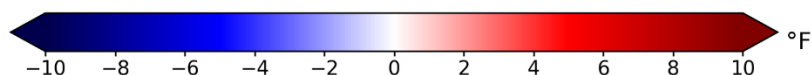
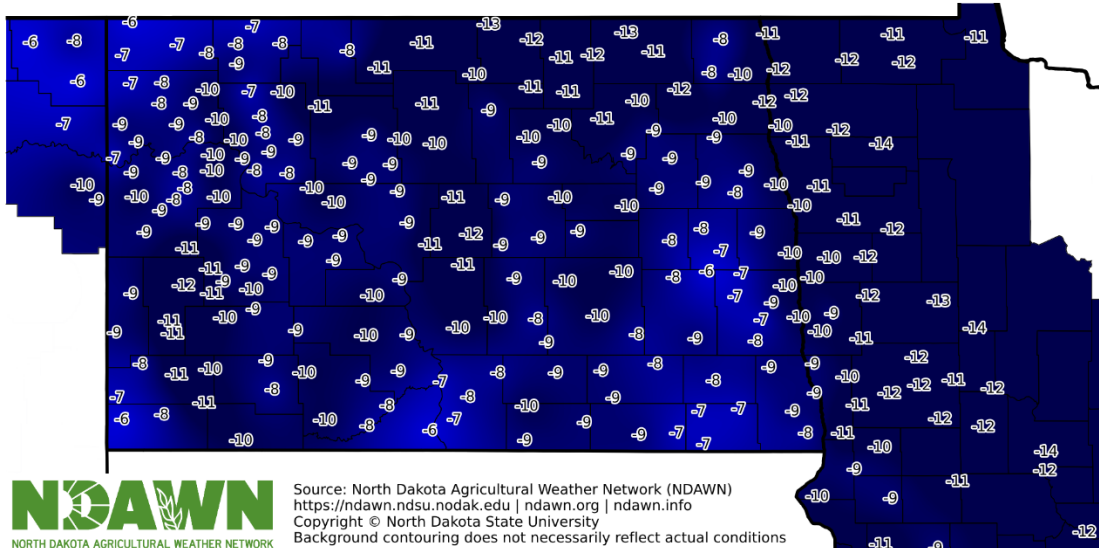


Figure 9: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature for the first half (top) and the second half (bottom) of January 2026 as measured at NDAWN stations

# Temperature

The highest temperature recorded during January at NDAWN stations was 56°F at the Sunny Slope 3W NDAWN station on January 4 and January 12 (Figure 10). The Baker 1N, Edmore 3NW, and Wolford 4E NDAWN stations only reached a maximum temperature of 36°F this month.

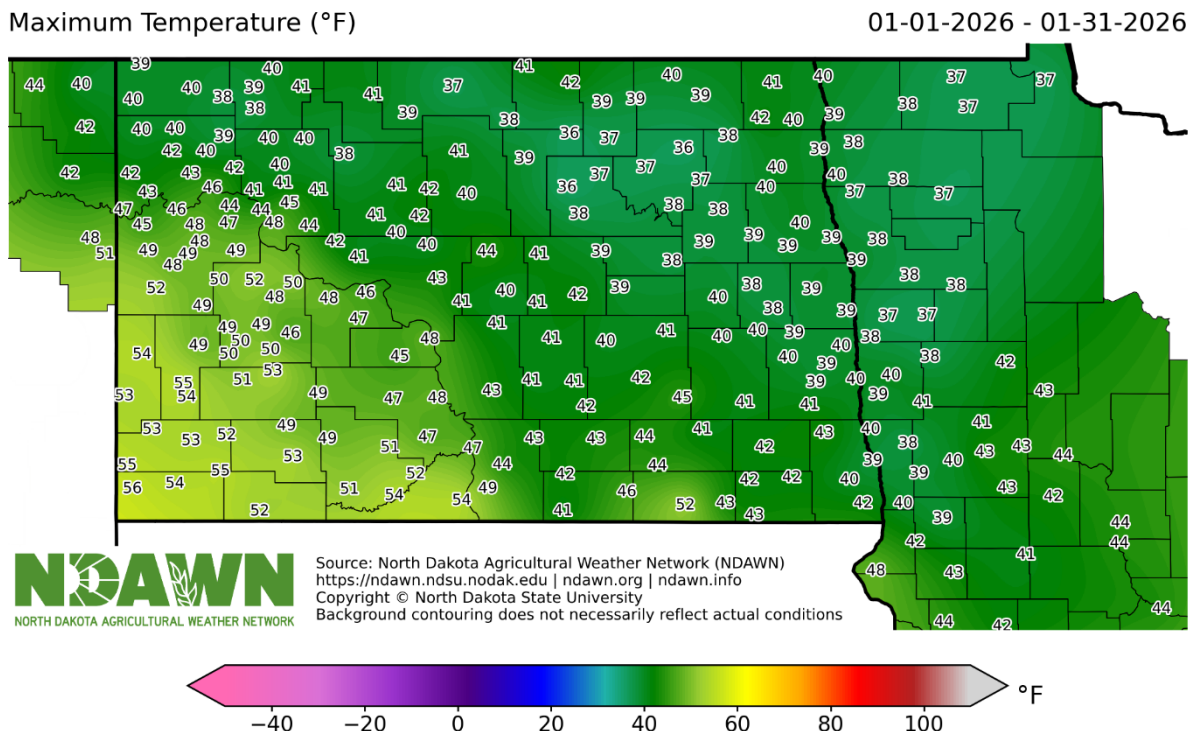


Figure 10: Maximum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in January 2026

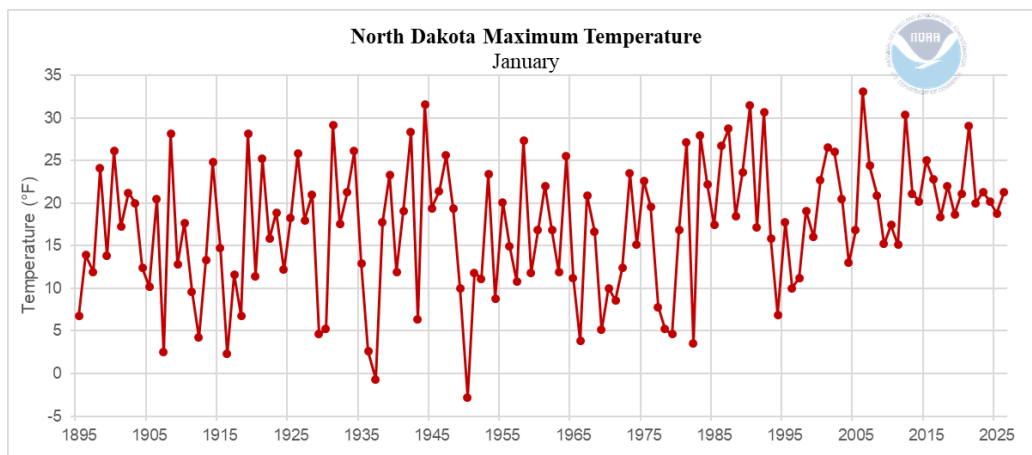


Figure 11: Average Maximum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of January (via NCEI)

# Temperature

10



The lowest temperature recorded during January at NDAWN stations was  $-40^{\circ}\text{F}$  at the Peace Garden NDAWN station on January 25 (Figure 12). The Milnor 1S NDAWN station only reached a minimum temperature of  $-18^{\circ}\text{F}$  this month.

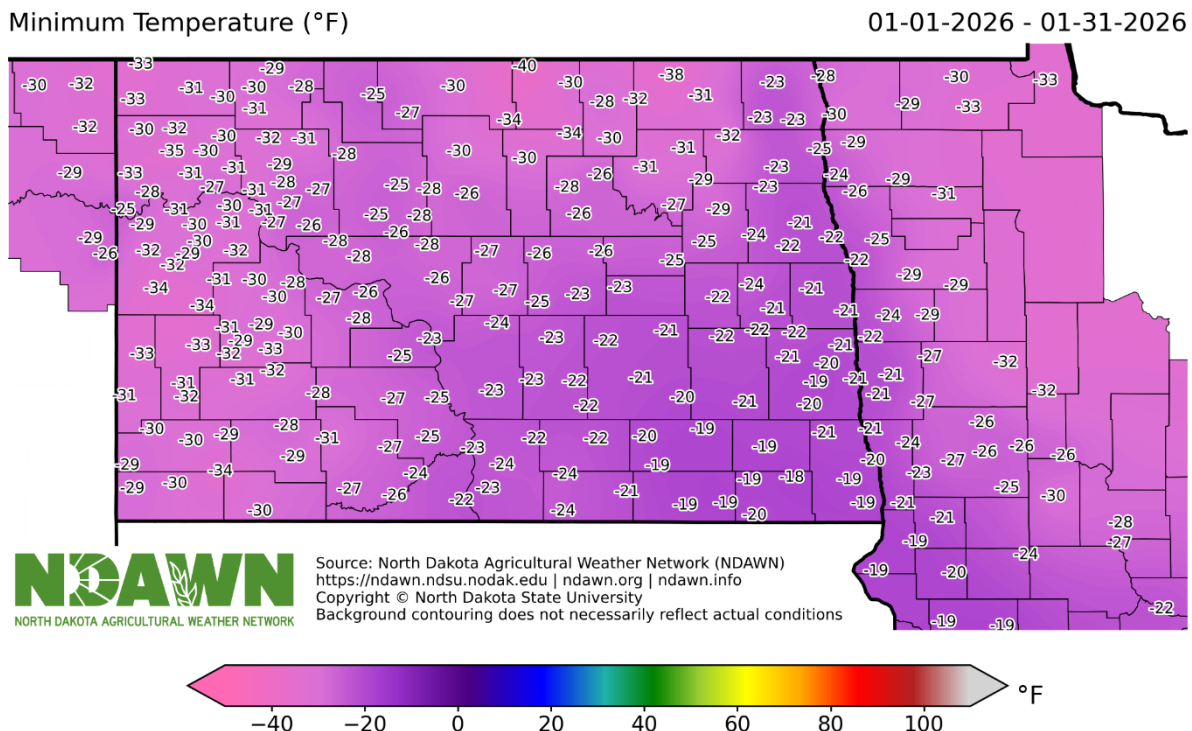


Figure 12: Minimum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in January 2026

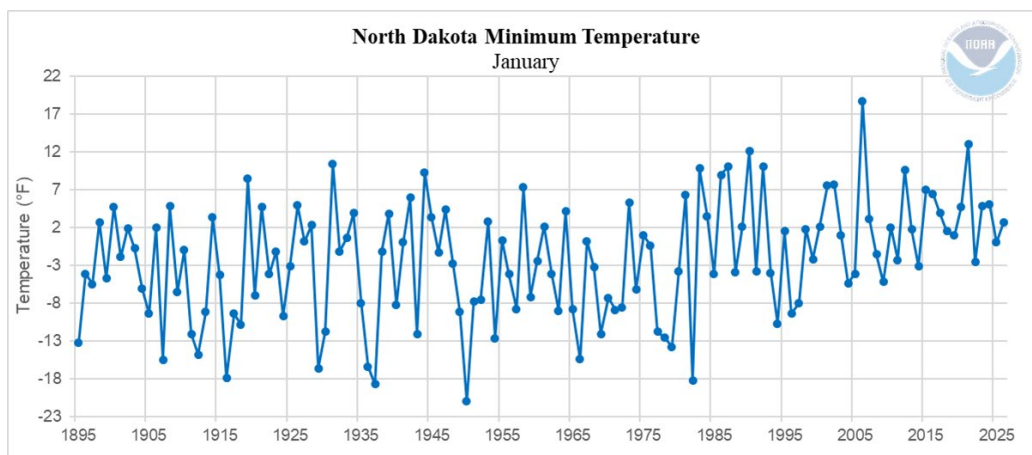


Figure 13: Average Minimum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of January (via NCEI)



## North Dakota January Temperature Summary

January 2026	Average T	Avg max T	Avg min T	Maximum	Minimum
	11.9°F	21.3°F	2.6°F		
Anomaly	+1.5°F	+1.2°F	+2.0°F	56°F	- 40°F
Rank					
Warmest	39th Warmest	41st Warmest	38th Warmest		
Coolest	94th Coldest	94th Coldest	95th Coldest		
Record					
Warmest	25.9°F (2006)	33.1°F (2006)	18.7°F (2006)		
Coolest	-11.9°F (1950)	-2.8°F (1950)	-21.0°F (1950)		

Table 2: January temperature summary for North Dakota. 2026 statistics from NDAWN station data. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (1895-2026) (NOAA).

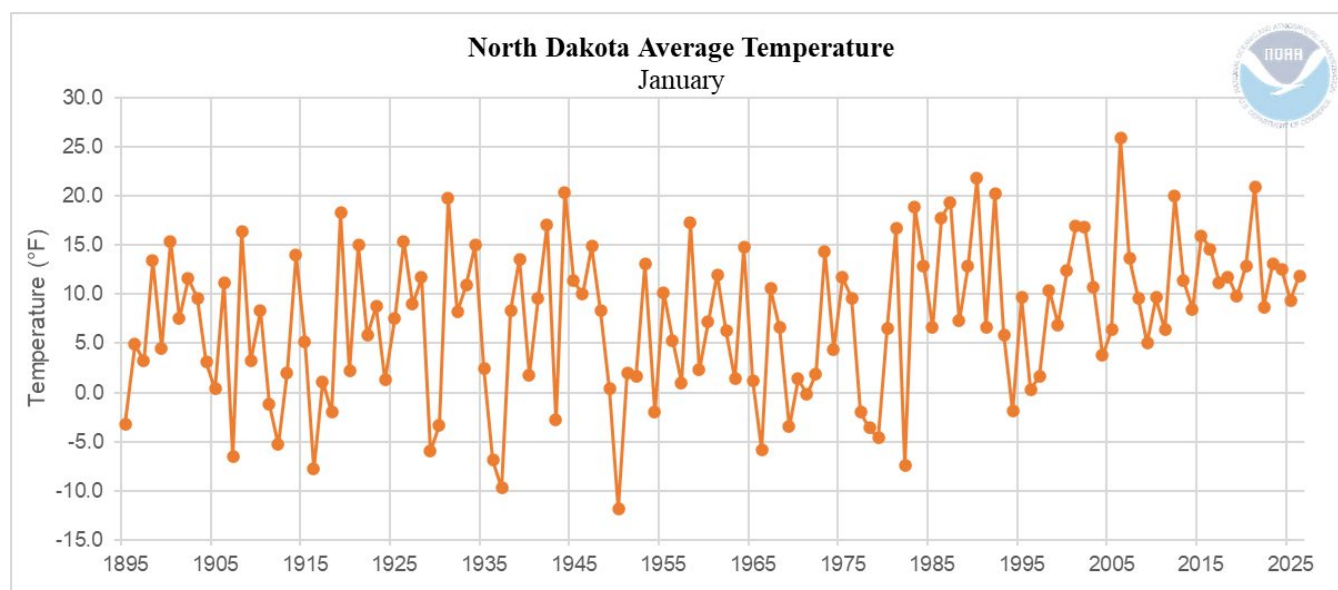


Figure 14: Average Temperature in North Dakota for the month of January (via NCEI)