

NORTH DAKOTA STATE CLIMATE OFFICE



April

2026



Typically, gold is found at the end of the rainbow, but in North Dakota it's oil.

After a long winter, April is eagerly awaited across North Dakota for the hope of warmer temperatures and the start of a new growing season. Yet, the month often falls short, as winter stubbornly clings to the region. This year was no exception. Many locations recorded their largest snow event of the season during the first week of April. While there were scattered warm days that included the season’s first 80s and even a few 90s, overall temperatures were below average for the month. Cold soil temperatures delayed the start of the 2026 planting season across much of the state, pushing fieldwork later than hoped and raising concerns about potential yield impacts at harvest.



Figure 1: A “Mirror River” effect from distant thunderstorms on the Little Missouri River at Sunny Slope 3W NDAWN



Precipitation Summary

April 2026 Statewide Average Precipitation: 1.22"

Percent of Normal Statewide Precipitation: 92%

April precipitation was a case of the have and the have-nots. Most of southern North Dakota recorded average to slightly above average precipitation, while northern, especially northwestern, North Dakota was dry. Areas along the Missouri River in McKenzie, Mountrail, & Williams Counties have recorded less than half an inch of rain since March 1.

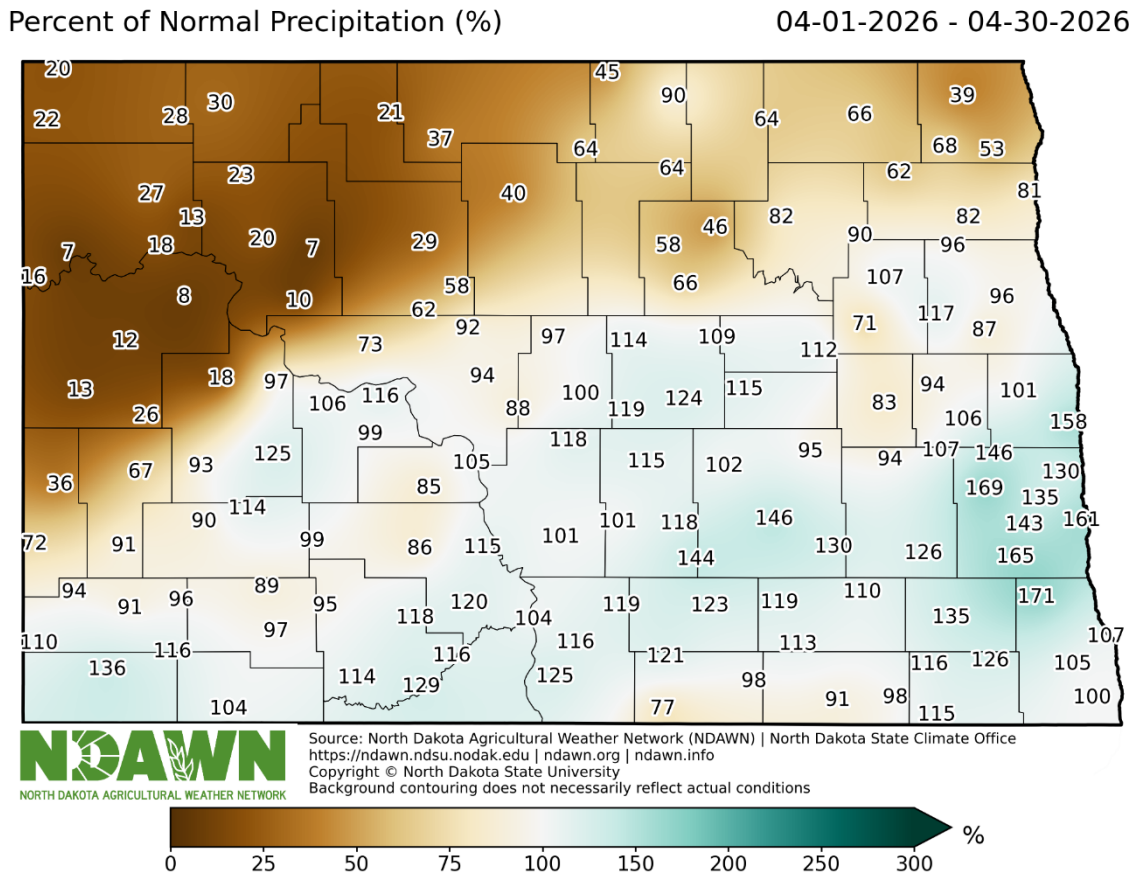


Figure 2: Percent of Normal Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season gauges in April 2026

Precipitation



The maximum monthly precipitation recorded by the North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) in North Dakota during the month of April was 2.81 inches at the Ekre station in Richland County. That was 171% of average. The minimum monthly precipitation recorded at NDAWN in North Dakota was in McKenzie County at the Williston 5SW station with only 0.07 inches of precipitation, 7% of normal (Figure 3).

Total Precipitation (in)

04-01-2026 - 04-30-2026

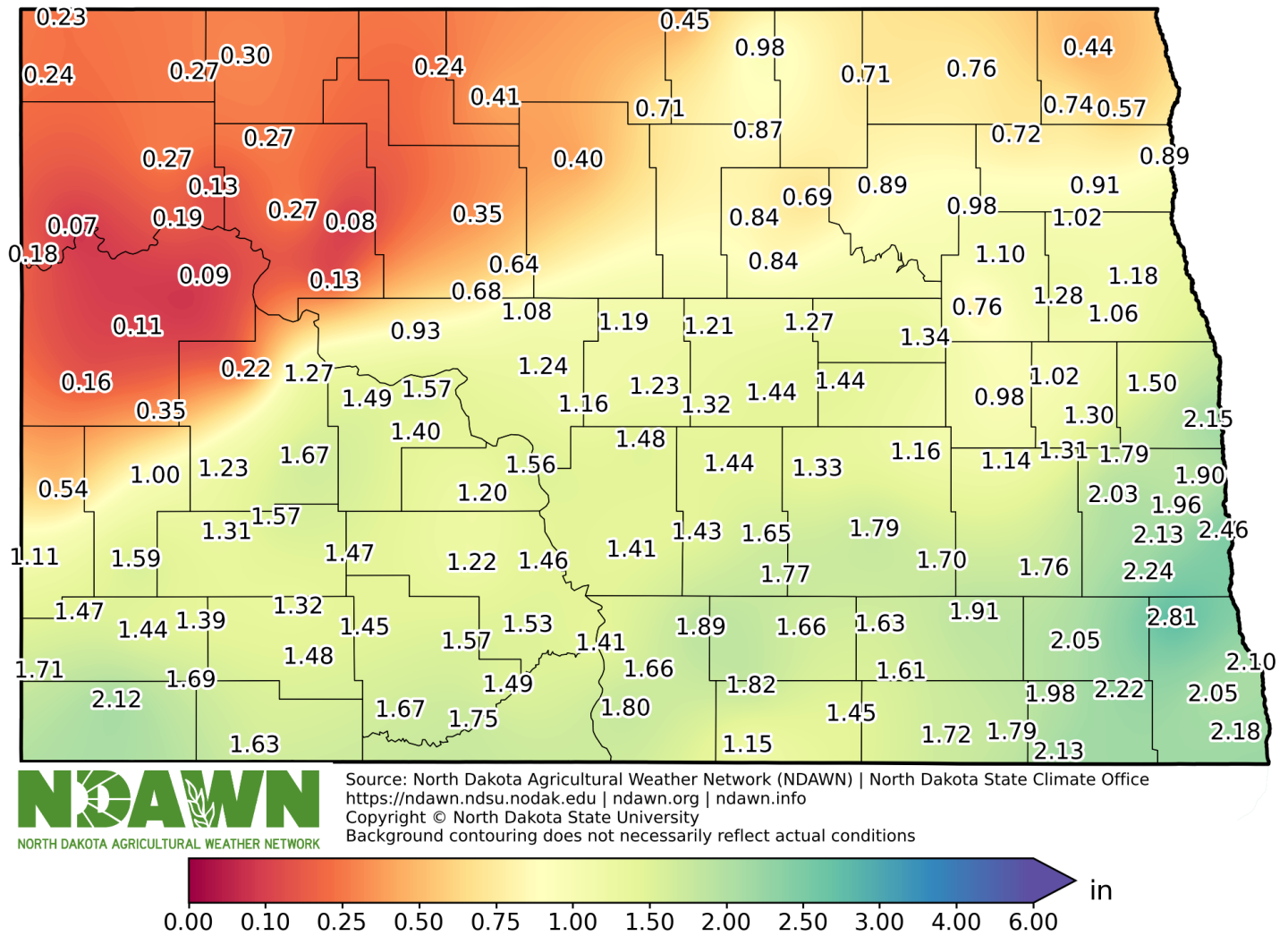


Figure 3: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season gauges in April 2026

Precipitation



From a long-term perspective, precipitation for the year is slightly to very below average, with a few pockets of above average. Statewide, precipitation has been about 80% of normal, or 0.63” below average, from January 1 – April 30. (Figure 4).

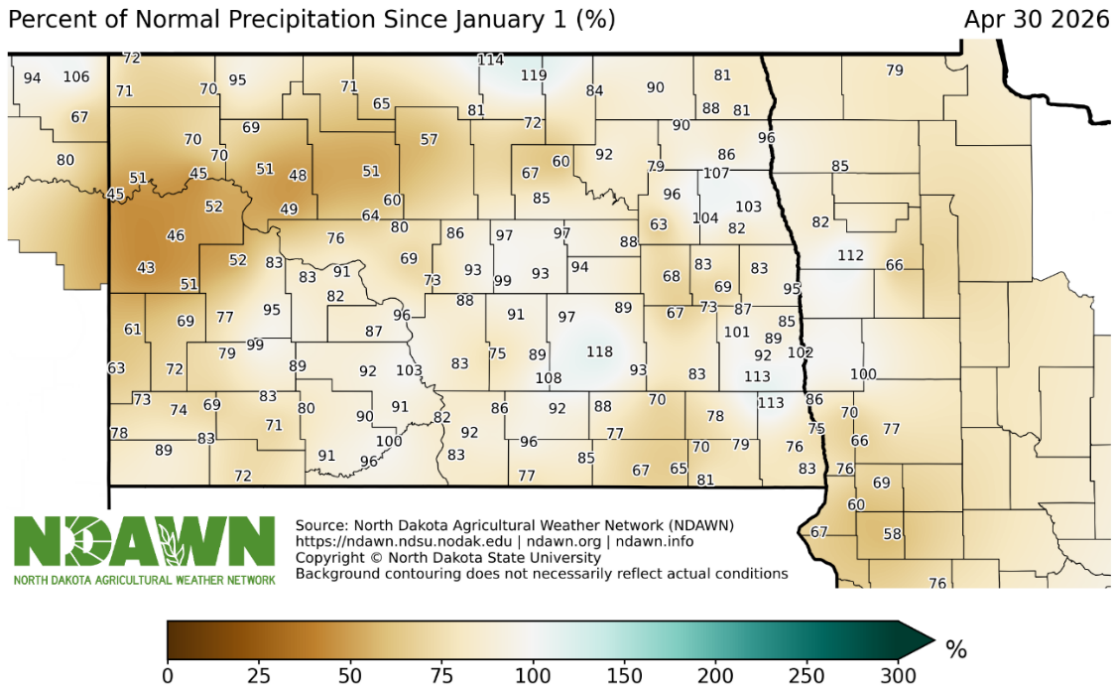
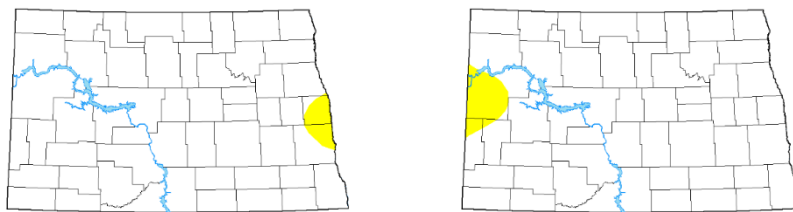


Figure 4: Percent of Average Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season gauges for the current year

Soils thawed out in April allowing for moisture to penetrate the soil. Eastern North Dakota received average precipitation alleviating dry soils there, but much below average precipitation in western North Dakota is leading to dry soils. (Figure 5).



Week	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
2026-03-31	98.22	1.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2026-04-28	96.72	3.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Change	-1.50	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Figure 5: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions March 31, 2026 (left) vs. April 28, 2026 (right) and the Categorical Percent Area



North Dakota Precipitation Summary

	Precipitation	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record Year
April 2026	1.22"	1.33"	-0.11"	68th Wettest	3.71" (1986)
				66th Driest	0.11" (1987)

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

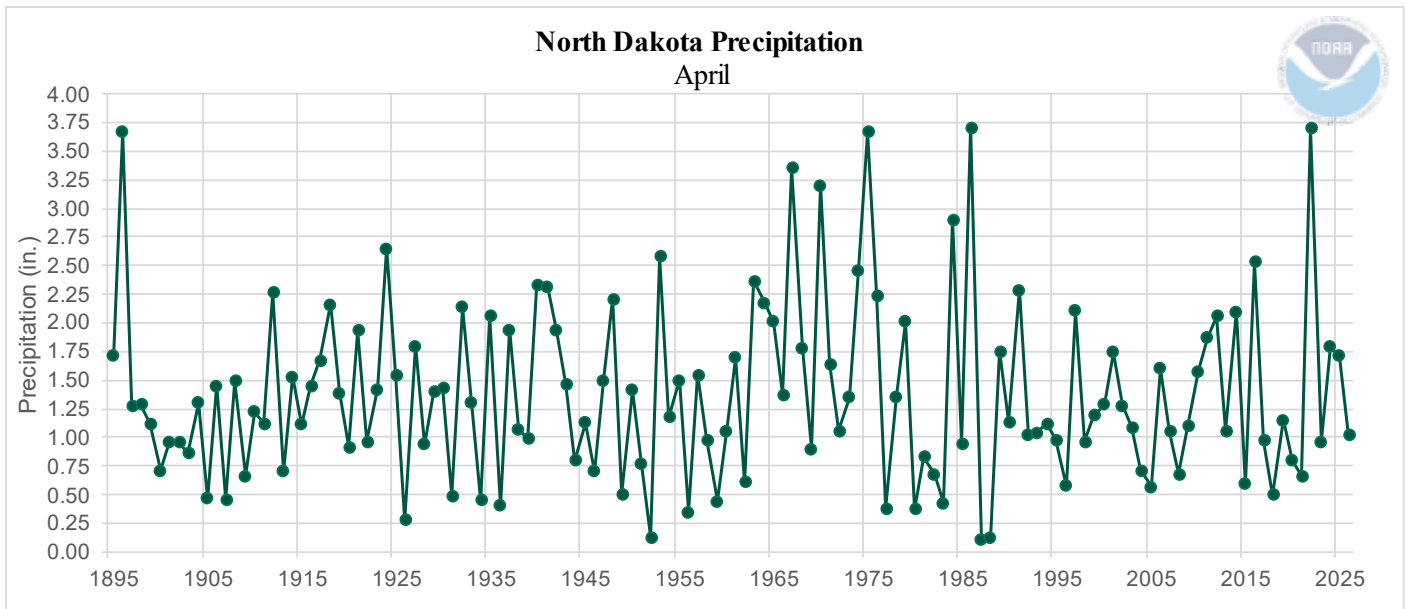


Figure 6: Average Statewide Total Precipitation in North Dakota for the month of April (via NCEI)



Temperature Summary

April 2026 Statewide Average Temperature: 39.0°F

Departure from Normal Statewide Temperature: 2.2°F below normal

In a switch-up from previous months, April was cooler than average to average across the entire state (Figure 7), with the last temperatures below 0°F of the cold season being measured on April 7.

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F) 04-01-2026 - 04-30-2026

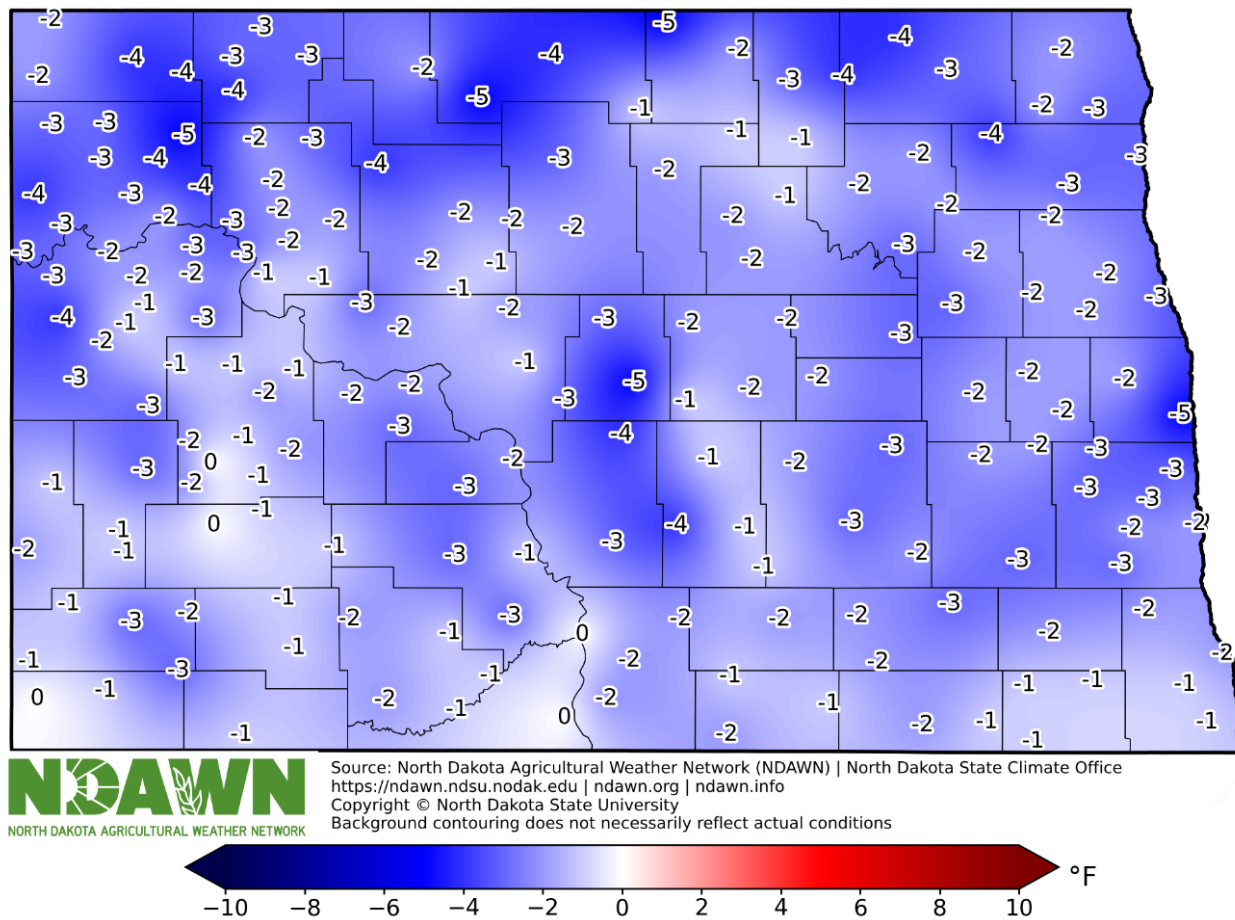


Figure 7: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in April 2026

Temperature



The highest temperature recorded during April at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 92.8°F at Ellendale 4NE NDAWN on April 22 (Figure 8).

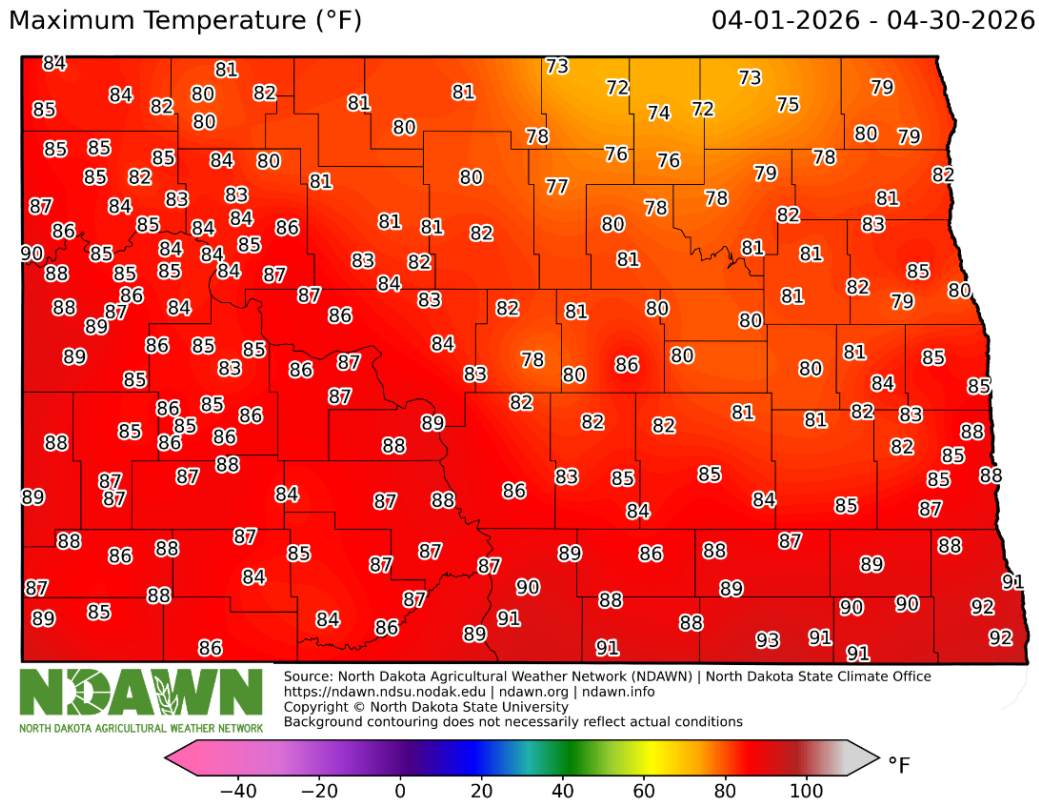


Figure 8: Maximum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in April 2026

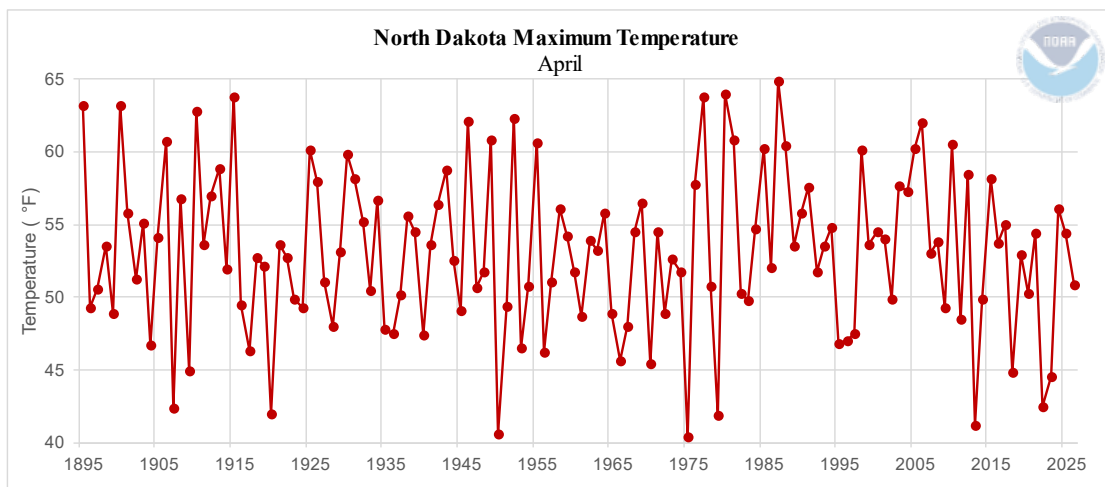


Figure 9: Average Maximum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of April (via NCEI)

Temperature



The lowest temperature recorded during April at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was -2.0°F at Gardner 2SSW NDAWN on April 7 (Figure 10).

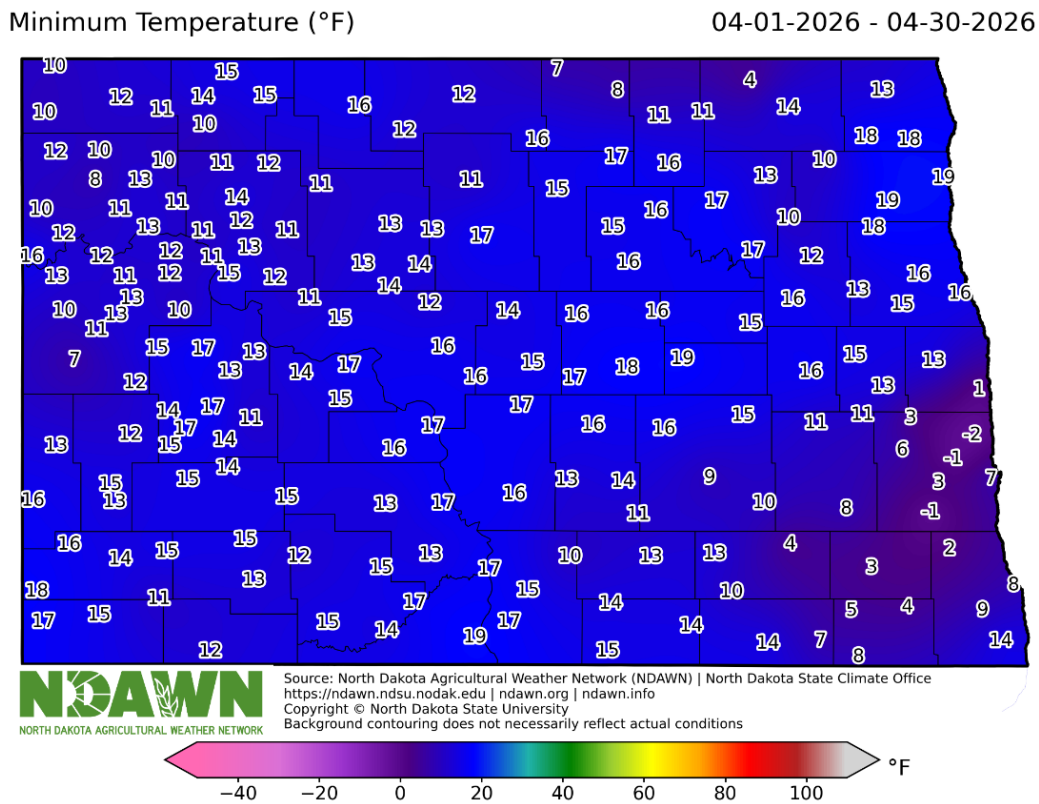


Figure 10: Minimum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in April 2026

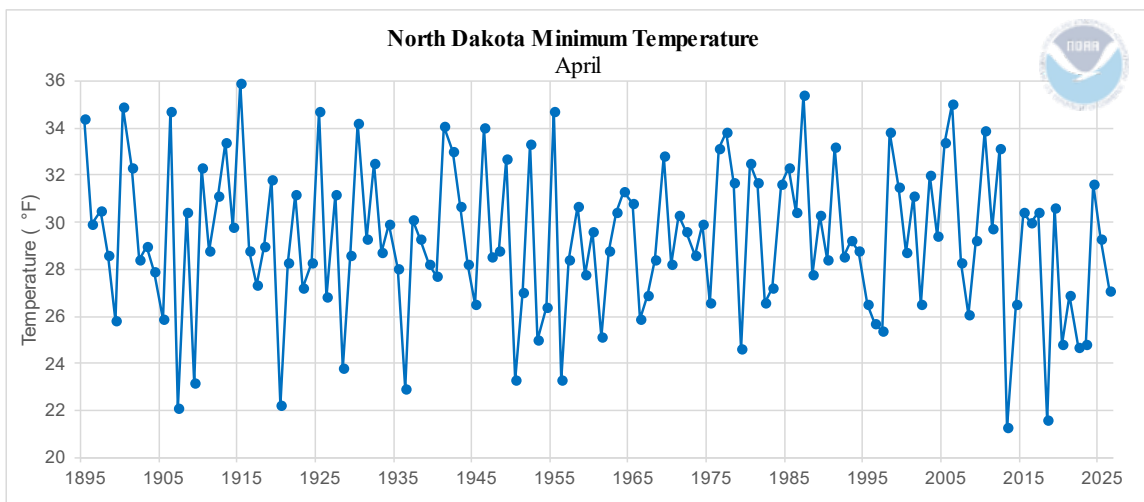


Figure 11: Average Minimum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of April (via NCEI)



North Dakota Temperature Summary

April 2026	Average T	Avg Max T	Avg Min T	Maximum	Minimum
	39.0°F	50.9°F	27.1°F		
Anomaly	-2.2°F	-2.5°F	-2.0°F		
Rank					
Warmest	96th Warmest	85th Warmest	100th Warmest		
Coollest	37th Coldest	48th Coldest	33rd Coldest		
Record					
Warmest	50.2°F (1987)	64.9°F (1987)	35.9°F (1915)		
Coollest	31.3°F (2013)	40.4°F (1975)	21.3°F (2013)		

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

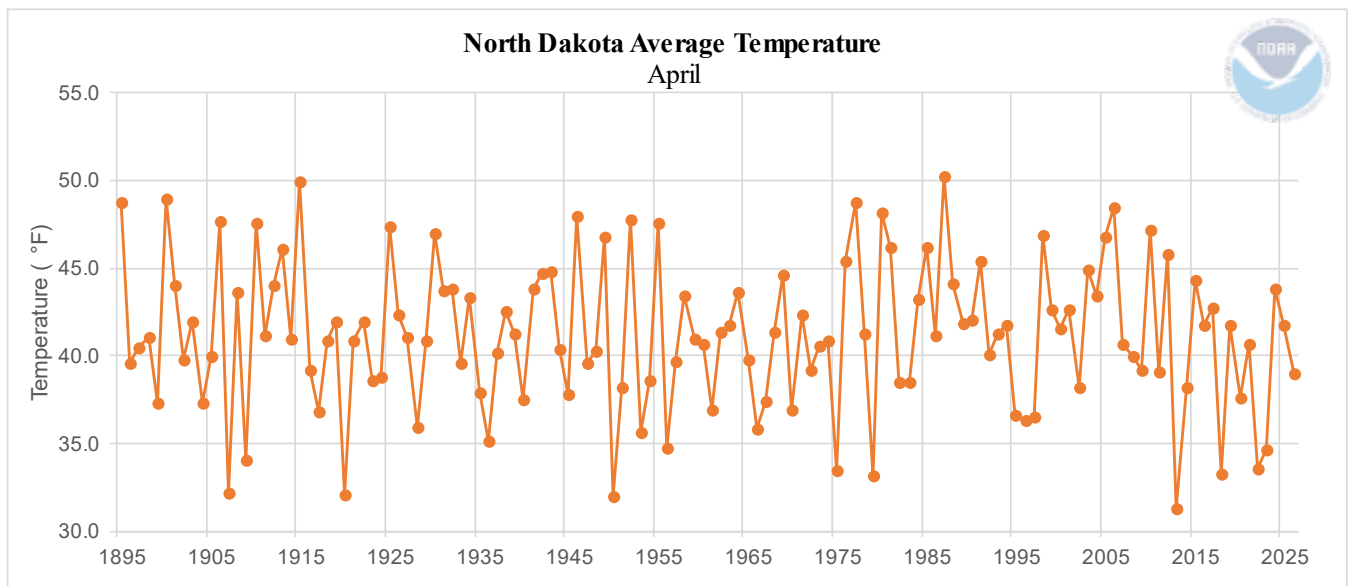


Figure 12: Average Temperature in North Dakota for the month of April (via NCEI)

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