

University of Waterloo Weather Station Summary - Winter 2007/08

(not surprisingly) A winter with way above average precipitation, but (perhaps surprisingly) also a winter with above average temperature

I have heard a lot of reports about the long, hard, and cold winter we have had this year. Although I agree with the long part (snow on the ground since late November and it is going to be with us for a while longer) and it has been a hard winter with the record snowfall at the UW weather station, however I can't agree with the cold part as it may surprise people that the winter was actually a degree warmer than average.

If you remember back to January we had two occasions where the temperatures were high enough (along with some rain) that all the snow melted. Combine this with the fact that we didn't really have that many really cold days (only 4 below minus 20) and at most only a few cold days in a row (our longest streak was 3 days in a row with significantly below average temperatures) and you can see why the overall temperature for the season was above average.

As well, although people often associate snow with cold temperatures, remember that you are more likely to get snow between 0 and -5 rather than say -15 to -20 and those nights when it does get down to -20 the skies are usually clear. Also keep in mind that in the winter the temperature doesn't necessarily have to be above zero to be above average.

What more can I say about the precipitation, the final tally was 268.9 mm compared to the average of 189.3 mm. The largest one day total was 33.2 mm of mostly rain on January 9th, but it was pretty consistently wet throughout the rest of the winter as well.

This is the highest total precipitation for the winter since 1973-74. This may be confusing as we have set the snowfall record but remember that precipitation is both rain and snow together and the above numbers are only for the winter season (Dec 21-Mar 19) rather than the snowfall season (Sep 1 – Aug 30).

Summary for Winter 2007/08:

Maximum Temperature 13.3 °C

Minimum Temperature -23.4 °C

Average Daily High Temperature -0.7 °C (Long term average -1.5 °C)

Average Daily Low Temperature -8.7 °C (Long term average -9.9 °C)

Total Precipitation 268.9 mm (Long term average 189.3 mm)

(Long term averages based on 1970-2000 data for the Waterloo Wellington Airport)