SUMMARY of the APRIL 2003 WEATHER ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

General:  In short, temperatures and number of fog days well below normal, with rainfall and number of rain days well above normal.  Average wind speed and wind gustiness was on the high side of expectation. Surprisingly, no records were set in any of these weather elements.

Temperature:  Yes, indeed, April 2003 was colder than the preceding January (by 3.2°F), traditionally the coldest month of the year, but so were seven other April’s in the last 50 years!  The April 2003 average of 52.9°F is 1.5°F colder than the previous month and 1.8°F below the 50-year normal.  (no record here:  the April 2001 mean was only 51.0°F – remember?).  The average daily maximum in April 2003 was 60.2°F – a whopping 3.3°F below normal.  (Again, no record.  It was 58.9°F in April 2001.)  The average nighttime minimum was close to normal: 45.5°F vs. 45.8°F.  In April 2003 only four daytime maxima were in the above-normal category!  No daily records to report, just a persistently cool month.

Precipitation:  Surely there must be a record to report here.  But, no!  The total of 2.74” compares to 1.60” expected – 171% of normal.  However, as recently as 1998 the April rainfall was 3.39”.  In fact, some eight April’s in the past 50 years recorded rainfall exceeding 2.74”, with 7.11” in 1967 the winner.  The 2.74” is the second highest monthly total this rain season, with 7.22” in December 2002 holding the lead.  Rain-year total to date:  17.40”, compared to 18.75” as the 50-year normal at month’s end.  And, now for the number of April 2003 rain days (with rainfall .01”or higher).  No, not a record, but there were sixteen such days (seven is normal).  In 1963 there were seventeen rain days, with 3.93”, and in 1967, nineteen, with 7.11”.

   One low-pressure system after another, mostly coming out of the Gulf of Alaska area, kept the area wet, with short periods of dryness in between.  No single day’s rain (6 PM to 6 AM) exceeded 0.40”.  The “wet” extended inland and south for most storms.  North of the Central Coast, and in the Santa Cruz and Santa Lucia mountains, rainfall exceeded considerably the Monterey Peninsula totals.  San Francisco was up close to 300% of normal rainfall for April (wettest since 1978), and the Sierra snow pack approached and exceeded winter normals.  Feature some 128” of April snow at High Camp (some 8200’) above Squaw Valley!

   The local skies may have been cloudy much of the time in April but the towering cumulus clouds all around on many April days were an unusual treat for local cloud enthusiasts.  Normally, we just don’t see that kind of cloud day after day in this area.  A further sign of instability in our local atmosphere in April was the observation of funnel clouds over the Bay near Marina early morning on 21 April.  And there were reports of small hail in scattered Monterey Peninsula locations on 2 April and 21 April, but none at the NWS Climate Station.

   As you know, by the time you read this report, May came in like April went out – wet!  The May monthly average of 0.50” was already exceeded by early morning 3 May!  And, the rain-year normal came within reach – only about 0.90” away!  Agricultural interests have taken a hit – especially strawberries and some vegetables.  And, generally, Central Coast fruit trees are falling behind their usual spring schedule of development.

Fog:  April 2003 was near fog-free!  Only one day with fog and that was limited in area and time.  Again, no record.  April 1967 and 1983 were fog-free April’s.  Normal number of fog days in April is eight.  That figure jumps to thirteen in May.

Winds:  Winds were near to above seasonal expectation, with nearly one-third of the days reporting higher-than-normal daily peak gusts at the NWSC Station.

90-Day Average Temperature and Precipitation Outlook for the Central Coast:  The National Weather Service 90-day outlook for May through July indicates above normal temperatures, while rainfall is expected to be close to normal.
### Comparative Weather Data for Stations on/near the Monterey Peninsula & Salinas

**April 2003**

Following are comparative figures from ten local observation sites:

1. National Weather Service Climate Station (NWSCS), (elevation 385') located in the western hilly section of Monterey;
2. National Weather Service Forecast Office (NWSFO) site (elevation 122'), located in the flat area of eastern Monterey, on the NPS Annex grounds adjacent to Airport;
3. Naval Postgraduate School Campus (NPS) site, Monterey; (elevation 45')
4. Ft. Ord (NPS) site (elevation 167') located just north of the Marina Municipal Airport (formerly Fritzschie Army Airfield). This is the site of the Naval Postgraduate School's wind profilers managed by Department of Meteorology;
5. Marina site, SE end of Marina located about 2-1/2 miles ESE of Monterey Bay (elevation 80');
6. Carmel Valley site near Carmel Village, vicinity of Ford Rd. and Lilac Lane (elevation 475') new this month;
7. Salinas site, vicinity of W. Blanco Rd. within 1/2 mile of S. Main St.;
8. Carmel site, 1/10 mile from Highway 1 and Rio Road;
9. Seaside site, NE end of Seaside, about 1 1/2 mi. east of Fremont St., near the Military Ave. boundary of Ft. Ord Village (elevation: 250').
10. Pacific Grove, vicinity of David and Forrest Avenues (elevation: 390').

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature (°F)</th>
<th>Precipitation (inches)</th>
<th>Wind (mph)</th>
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<td>Avg. Max.</td>
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<td>Avg. Min.</td>
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FOOTNOTES:

Observations for precipitation: a = 5 or 6 PM PST, b = midnight PST, c = 4 PM local, d = 7 or 8 AM local  
(NOTE: for d: 24-h rainfall measured 8 AM, first day of the month counts for previous month)  
@ = 51-year average, # = 45-year average, + = 17-year average, & = 19-year average.

NWS Climate Station, Monterey, CA  
April 2003

Total = 2.74  
Average = 45.5  
Average = 60.2