SUMMARY OF THE APRIL 1986 WEATHER ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA

General:  April 1986 averaged mild, with light precipitation, more fog than usual and winds near the usual expectations.

Temperature:  April continued the warm trend started in December but not in the same proportions as January, February and March.  In fact, the 54.7°F average (0.5°F above 35-year normal) in April is the coldest month since December.  Daytime and nighttime temperatures contributed almost equally to the slight positive anomaly:  63.6°F average versus 63.0°F normal for the highs and 45.8°F average versus 45.3°F normal for the lows.  Absolute high for the month, 85°F, was registered on 20 April, while the month’s low, 40°F, was set on the last day of the month.

Like every other month starting with November 1985, several daily records were broken.  New daily minimum records – a warm 55°F on 20 April beats 51°F in 1982 and a cool low of 40°F on 30 April beats 41°F in 1962.

New daily maximum records -- 77°F on 19 April beats 76°F in 1977 and 85°F on 20 April beats 81°F in 1982.

Precipitation:  April’s rainfall was on the dry side, with only 0.42” recorded.  It’s the driest April amount since 0.04” in the drought year of 1977.  The rain-year total (1 July 1985 to 30 April 1986) now stands at 19.94”, which is 1.25” above the 35-year normal to 30 April and 0.65” in excess of the total rain-year expectation to 30 June.  April is the last month of the rainy season.  In May, 0.40” is the normal and 0.26” is the median rainfall.  (Note: 0.38” already fell in the first few days of May 1986.)

April 1986 did produce another thunderstorm day (i.e., a day on which thunder is heard) on 6 April, bringing the 1986 total to seven days and sets a record for the most thunderstorms days so early in the calendar year.  If we record a thunderstorm day in May, it would not only set a new record for total number of such days to date in the calendar year, but it would be the only thunderstorm day ever recorded in May in at least the past 23 years!  Every other month in the calendar year has recorded thunderstorms on the Monterey Peninsula.

Wind:  The Monterey Airport winds in April averaged 6.9 miles per hour (mph) for the diurnal period 6 AM to 11 PM, which is slightly above the March 1986 and April 1985 averages.  The average maximum daily gust in April, recorded at the National Weather Service Climate Station, is 20.6 mph, slightly above the April 1985 average but 2 mph below the March 1986 average.

Fog:  The number of fog days (i.e., days with one or more hours of fog) has been running above the 23-year average ever since September 1985.  This past month there were nine such days, which is two more than the expectation.  The fog season (i.e., 13 or more fog days/month) begins in May and runs through October.  For all other months of the year the average number of fog days is seven or less.