SUMMARY OF THE AUGUST 1991 WEATHER ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA

General: August 1991 averaged relatively cool by day and warm by nite, with light winds, and recurrent drizzly conditions along with persistent low clouds.

Temperature: The cool day-time temperature pattern of the last five month continued into August, again due to persistent fog/low clouds: 68.8°F vs. 69.1°F normal (40-years of record). Consistent with the cloud cover, nite-time temperatures were on the warm side: 54.8°F vs. 52.7°F. Overall, the month's average, 61.9°F, exceeded the 60.9°F normal for August.

The record-breaking number of days with fog the past four months (see Fog section) and the persistency of low cloud/fog through the daylight hours has characterized 1991 as a summerless year in the local area. The situation is similar all along the Central California coast. Brief interludes of warm temperatures have occurred – as the 88°F (high for the month) on the 13th and the warm 61°F minimum on the 14th (which is the warmest August low temperature for any 24-hour period, 6 PM to 6 PM, in at least 40 years). Moreover, the daytime highs are not very representative of the overall daytime temperature pattern since the period including the peak and near-peak temperatures was short-lived on most days, coincident with very limited afternoon breaks in the low cloud cover.

Low temperature for August 1991 was 51°F of the 24th. Several daily temperature records were set in the August just past: 88°F on 13 August beat 83°F set in 1965 and 80°F on 14 August beat 78°F set in 1983. The same period also recorded several record warm minimums: 59°F reading on 13 August (topped 57°F in 1987), 61°F on 14 August (topped 57°F in 1965), and 59°F on 15 August (topped 57°F in 1983).

Precipitation: Although calling any summer-season month wet doesn’t seem appropriate, it was just that in August 1991! 0.26" fell on seven days with measureable precipitation, compared to a 40-year August average of 0.11" on three days. The well-entrenched trough of low pressure off the California coast, a mild version of a wet-winter pressure pattern, was responsible for the excessive low-cloud cover, which related directly to the cool day-time temperatures described above.

At month's end the rain year total (since 1 July) stood at 0.31", compared to 0.18" normal and 0.11" last year at this time. Only three Auguts' in the past 40 years have produced more rain. 0.97" in 1976 and 0.43" in 1975, both followed by very dry wet-season rainfalls, and 0.35" in August 1964, which was followed by a slightly above normal rainy season. It is still too early for a reliable estimate of the nature of the upcoming wet season (November 1991 to April 1992).

Fog: Fog occurrence continued at significantly higher-than-normal levels. Starting in May and June, each with 20 vs. 14 fog days normal, there were 28 vs. 21 in July and now 25 vs. 21 normal in August. Thus, we have 93 out of the last 123 days (76%) with fog, a majority of which were cloudy for most day light hours! That, of course, is a record for the May-August periods (beats 85 days in May through August 1986). However, using the period June through September 1974 there were 96 fog days and that is at least a 28-year record for any four-month period.
Wind: August was a so-so month in the wind department. The airport average (6 AM to 11 PM) was 8 miles per hour (mph) while the average daily high gust at the National Weather Service Climate Station was 21 mph. The high gust, 33 mph, was recorded on both 14 and 31 August 1991.