SUMMARY OF THE MAY 1985 WEATHER ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA

General: May 1985 goes into the record book as a cool, moderately wet month, with near-average fog conditions and seasonal gusty winds.

Temperature: May 1985 became the seventh month in the last eight with below normal temperatures. Only April 1985 was above normal. Moreover, this past month was the coolest May since 1977. The overall average, 54.8°F is 1.2°F below the 34-year normal. Both daytime maxima (62.8°F vs 64.3°F) and nighttime minima (45.7°F vs 47.6°F) contributed to the coolness. The temperature reached into the 70's only one day (74°F on 22 May) while dipping to a low of 41°F on 12 May. The absolute maximum for the month is normally 75°F or greater 75% of the time. Although a minimum of 41°F is not a record, there are only two other May’s in 34 years with a lower absolute minimum (39°F in 1952 and 40°F in 1960).

Attesting to the low minimums during the month, the following daily records were set or tied: 42°F on 8 May beat 43°F in 1973; 41°F on 12 May beat 44°F in 1970; 43°F on 13 May tied 43°F in 1974; and 44 on 15 May tied the record for date in 1968. Further, the maximum of 57°F on 19 May is the lowest maximum for that date (beats 59°F in 1973).

Precipitation: Along with the cool May temperatures there were five days with measurable precipitation, almost exclusively in the last quarter of the month. The total of 0.32” is only 0.08” below the May 34-year normal. The rain-year total stands at 16.46” at month’s end, compared to a normal of 19.06”. Most of the moisture would be classified as drizzle (rather than rain or rain showers) in connection with a persistent upper-level trough of low pressure just off the west coast during the last quarter of the month.

Fog: Days with some fog were about as expected: 15 vice a normal of 14 days. Historically, June is much like May in the fog category. The high season for fog is July and August.

Wind: Winds in May were gusty as expected. The average gust at the National Weather Service Climate Station is 23 miles per hour (mph), although gusts on three days were in the 30’s (maximum 39 mph on 16 May). The airport average wind (for the period 6 AM to 11 PM) is 7.9 mph.