Environment Canada Imaging Cover Page

Report N.: 

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CANADA - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT - METEOROLOGICAL BRANCH

MAY CLIMATIC DATA FOR TORONTO

The urban area of Metropolitan Toronto extends for some 30 miles along the north shore of Lake Ontario and is about 20 miles wide in the central portion. Central Toronto is largely built upon a plain sloping back from the lake where the elevation is 245 feet above mean sea level, while at the northern limits of urban development the land is about 700 feet above MSL.

Meteorological observations have been taken on or near the University of Toronto Campus since 1840. The University of Toronto is located near the heart of the urban area, about two miles north of the lake front. Since 1909 observations have been taken at the observatory on the northern corner of the campus at the Headquarters of the Meteorological Branch (315 Bloor Street West).

Toronto has a continental type climate which is moderated by the presence of the Great Lakes. Being in the latitude zone of the westerlies, it has an extremely variable climate from year to year and even from day to day, as weather disturbances and different air masses move across the area usually from the western sector.

Daily temperatures rise gradually during the latter half of the month from an average high of 65°F on the 16th of May to 71°F by the end of the month, while at night lows rise from an average of 46°F on the 16th to 53°F at month's end. In the last 30 years the temperature fell to the freezing point on one occasion, and one reading of 90°F was observed. Frequently the lake breeze from Lake Ontario holds the afternoon downtown temperatures somewhat lower than those in the northern suburbs. The mean daily temperature for the latter half of May is 58°F, while the all time maximum and minimum temperatures are 94°F and 29°F respectively.

The precipitation regime is fairly uniform for Toronto throughout the year and the standard normal for May is 2.76". No measurable snowfall amounts were observed during the latter half of the month over the past 30 years, although a trace was reported on two occasions. Most of the rainfall results from afternoon or evening showers and thunderstorms. Measurable rainfall is reported on an average of about one day in three, and the extreme 24-hourly rainfall which the Toronto area has experienced in over 125 years of record for the latter half of the month was 2.70 inches on May 21, 1894.

MAY CLIMATIC DATA FOR TORONTO

MAY 16 - 31

Temperature	°F	°C
Mean	58	14.4
Mean daily maximum	68	20.0
Mean daily minimum	49	9.4
Extreme maximum	94	34.4
Extreme minimum	29	-1.7

MONTH OF MAY

Rainfall	Normal	Highest	Lowest
Total	2.76" 70 mm.	9.36" 238 mm.	0.39" 10 mm.
Days with rain	12	19	4
Thunderstorm days	3	6	0

Bright Sunshine	Normal	Highest	Lowest
Mean daily (Hours)	7.1	10.2	4.3
Percent possible	48	70	29

Relative Humidity	
0700 EST	70%
1300 EST	49%

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