

Weather officials: Long, hot summer for Calif.

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

As if the drought isn't enough to worry about, weather officials say California is likely to experience a hotter-than-normal summer this year, a phenomenon certain to add anxiety for water agencies and fire departments.

Summer doesn't officially begin until Saturday. But the heat already is scorching the record books, as seen by a wave of 100-degree weather that swept across Northern California early last week. Heat records fell at six locations in the Sacramento Valley, including downtown Sacramento, which saw a high of 107 degrees last Monday. That shattered the date's record of 103, set in 1883.

This follows what already has been an unusually warm winter and spring. In a study released Thursday, the National Climatic Data Center reported that California experienced its warmest January through May on record, with temperatures 5 degrees above the 20th-century average. Five California cities also set records: Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco and Eureka. In Sacramento's case, the first five months of this year were 3.7 degrees warmer than the average over the past 30 years.

In its long-range forecasts, the National Weather Service is reporting that odds favor a summer across all of California that is warmer than average. The agency extends that forecast all the way into October, the earliest that Californians normally expect seasonal rains to resume.

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