

MAY 2001: The final month of Spring was highlighted by near-normal temperatures and above-normal precipitation. The month began with summerlike warmth as highs reached into the eighties from the 1st through the 5th. Daily temperatures during the 5-day period averaged between 7°F and 13°F above normal at DCA. In addition, both BWI and IAD recorded their first 90°F reading of the year on the 3rd and 4th, respectively. DCA failed to reach 90°F during the month, marking the first May since 1995 without a 90°F+ reading at the airport. In fact, the extreme monthly maximum (88°F on the 11th) at DCA was actually lower than that (89°F) recorded in April. Abnormal warmth returned again from the 10th-12th as readings once again soared into the eighties across the local area. Shortly after mid-month, a dramatic change occurred with subnormal temperatures prevailing on 17 of the last 19 days at DCA. Highs failed to reach 80°F between the 13th and 31st and barely topped 60°F on a few days. Chilly nights were also prevalent during this period with many locations recording readings in the forties. At IAD, lows dropped into the thirties on the 14th (36°F) and 15th (38°F).

The month began on a very dry note with most locations recording less than 0.1" of precipitation through the first 17 days of the month. A rapid end to the dry weather occurred a short while later as more than 5 inches of rain soaked much of the local area between the 18th and 27th. On the 22nd, IAD reported a record daily rainfall of 2.07 inches. Soaking rains on the 26th produced more than an inch of rain at most locations, including 1.72" at BWI. Several episodes of severe weather also occurred during the latter part of the month with up to 9 F0 (winds up to 72mph) or F1 (winds up to 112 mph) tornadoes (7 in Maryland and 2 in Virginia) were reported across the local area. On the 25th, a tornado (F1) set down in Waldorf, MD, causing significant property damage. A couple of days later another tornado (F1) touched down in Olney, MD. Seven other tornadoes (all F0) occurred between the 22nd and the 27th across parts of northern Virginia, and southern Maryland. The longest lived of these twisters cut a five mile path across Warren County, VA. Fortunately, no injuries were reported with any of the tornadoes.

MAY 2001 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr to Date
National (DCA)	75.0	56.7	65.9	66.4	-0.5	88/11	46/7	3.71	3.66	+0.05	13.35
Baltimore (BWI)	75.2	51.5	63.4	63.4	0.0	90/3*	38/7	5.34	3.72	+1.62	16.57
Dulles (IAD)	74.5	50.7	62.6	62.2	+0.4	90/4	33/7	5.69	4.02	+1.67	16.24
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	75.0	49.9	62.5	N/A	N/A	90/3*	37/7	5.49	3.8	+1.7	16.88
Andrews AFB (ADW)	72.2	50.5	61.4	N/A	N/A	88/4	34/7	4.92	4.0	+0.92	17.68

Other Occurrences: * May 4th;

SPRING (MARCH-MAY) 2001: Near-normal temperatures and above normal precipitation highlighted Spring across most of the Washington/Baltimore area. Seasonal temperature departures reached -1.1°F at DCA, but were very close to normal at both BWI (-0.2°F) and IAD (+0.2°F). There were 56 spring days (61%) with below normal temperatures at DCA, and no 90°F+ reading recorded during Spring (the first such occurrence since 1993). The season began with a persistent pattern of colder than normal weather across the Washington/Baltimore area. In fact, it was the coldest March in five years at the three major airports with monthly temperature departures between -2°F and -4°F. There were 25 March days with at or below-normal temperatures at DCA, including 11 days with lows at or below freezing (the most such March days since 1993). There were only 4 days when highs topped 60°F at DCA and no days with highs at or above 70°F (the first such occurrence in March since 1993). Highs more typical of January (upper 30's and low 40's) were observed on March 5th, 6th, 26th and 27th across the local area. April was highlighted by above-normal temperatures across the Washington/Baltimore area and monthly temperatures between +1°F and +2.5°F at the three major airports. There were 16 days with at or above normal temperatures at DCA, 4 days with summerlike heat and several days that featured some significant daily temperature variations. On April 9th, highs soared close to 90°F at many locations. At IAD, a reading of 89°F established a daily record high. The most prolonged period of warmth occurred from the 22nd-24th as highs topped 80°F. On the 23rd, IAD reported a record daily high as the mercury reached 88°F. There were four days with temperatures above 80°F at the three major airports (the most such April days since 1995 at DCA). In sharp contrast, a brief period of unseasonably cool weather prevailed from April 16th-19th with daily temperature departures between -7°F and -13°F during this four-day period. During this time IAD reported a daily record low of 27°F on the 19th. The month also featured some wide daily variations in temperature. On the 9th, BWI recorded a low of 47°F, but by afternoon the high had reached 88°F. On the 27th, IAD recorded a high of 80°F after a morning low of 34°F. The final month of Spring featured near-normal temperatures across the Washington/Baltimore area with monthly temperature departures between -0.5°F and +0.5°F at the three major airports. The month was highlighted by some summerlike heat during the first half of the month and a prolonged period of cooler than normal conditions during the latter half.

Spring precipitation totals were above-normal at most locations, the result of a wet March and an excessively wet ten-day period in May (18th-27th). Seasonal precipitation surpluses were generally between 1 and 2 inches across most of the area, although DCA recorded slightly below-normal spring precipitation due to significantly lower rainfall totals in May than other locations. The season opened with above-normal March precipitation at all five airports. It was the first wetter than normal month at all five locations since September 2000. March precipitation totals ranged from about four inches at DCA & IAD to almost five inches at BWI, DAA & ADW. The majority of the months precipitation fell from two major storm systems. On March 20th-21st, a strong coastal storm soaked the area, generating over an inch of rain at most locations and nearly two inches at BWI (1.81"). The storm was accompanied by gale force wind gusts (up to 50 mph) in some areas. The abundant moisture combined with high winds, downed trees and power lines and cut off power to some areas. About a week later (March 29th-30th), another intense storm brought copious amounts of rain to the region with two-day precipitation totals between 1.5" and 2.0" at most locations. Despite the chilly March conditions, snowfall was sparse with monthly totals of an inch or less recorded at the three major airports. Much drier conditions prevailed across the region during April with monthly precipitation totals generally under two inches at most locations. Both BWI and DAA recorded their driest April since 1985, with 1.32" and 1.17", respectively. Most of the month's precipitation fell between April 6th and 18th. No measurable rainfall occurred across much of the local area from the 19th through months' end. The dry weather along with rapid spring growth resulted in some of the highest pollen readings (1500+ pollen grains per cubic meter) in a decade across the Washington/Baltimore area. Most of the May precipitation fell during a 10-day period (18th-27th). Many locations recorded over 5 inches of rain during this period and monthly surpluses of an inch or more.

SPRING 2001 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Month-Day			Precipitation (In)		
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Snow
National (DCA)	65.1	46.3	55.7	56.8	-1.1	89/4-9	25/3-6*	9.27	9.54	-0.27	0.2
Baltimore (BWI)	64.6	42.4	53.5	53.7	-0.2	90/5-3#	20/3-27	11.42	10.19	+1.23	T
Dulles (IAD)	64.6	41.2	52.9	52.7	+0.2	90/5-4	17/3-27	11.98	10.30	+1.68	1.0
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	66.0	41.8	53.9	N/A	N/A	91/4-9	21/3-27^	12.01	10.7	+1.3	1.2
Andrews AFB (ADW)	62.2	40.8	51.5	N/A	N/A	88/5-4	19/3-28	11.62	10.6	+1.0	T

Other Occurrences: * March 27th; # May 4th; ^ March 28th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUMMER: Some noteworthy seasonal statistics.

With Spring behind us, we now look ahead to the meteorological Summer (June-August). Below is a list of some of the summer extremes that have occurred in Washington since records began in 1871.

Temperature Extremes

- Coldest:** 1907 (Avg. Temp: 71.4°F; Dep. Nml.: -6.7°F)
- Warmest:** 1980 (Avg. Temp: 80.0°F; Dep. Nml.: +1.9°F)
- Extreme Minimum Temp.:** 43°F (Jun. 2, 1897)
- Extreme Maximum Temp.:** 106°F (Jul. 20, 1930 & Aug. 6, 1917)
- Most days with:** highs ≥ 90°F: 67 (1980)

Precipitation Extremes

- Wettest:** 1906 (Tot. Prec.: 27.05 ; Dep. Nml.: +15.96)
- Driest:** 1962 & 1966 (Tot. Prec.: 4.62; Dep. Nml.: -6.47)
- Most precipitation in one day (liquid):** 6.39" (Aug. 23, 1933)

