

October 2003: The monthly trend of above normal precipitation with subnormal temperatures continued through October across the Washington/Baltimore area. Monthly temperatures averaged between 0.3°F and -1.3°F below normal at the three major airports. Temperatures were consistently below normal with the exception of the 8th-13th when maximum temperatures reached into the 70s. October is often the month the local area experiences the seasons' first freeze, especially the northern and western suburbs. The growing season ended at many locations between the 23rd and 25th as temperatures fell to at or below freezing. The lowest monthly readings were observed on the 24th when the mercury fell to 28°F at IAD and 29°F at BWI. March and August remain the only two months when the region marked above normal temperatures in 2003.

While less violent than September, October storms still packed a punch. Rainfall was above normal across the area, totaling between 4"-6" at most locations. Monthly precipitation surpluses of 2.66" were recorded at BWI and 1.26" at IAD. Three storm systems accounted for the majority of the months' rainfall. On the 14th, a strong frontal system produced heavy evening showers and thunderstorms that soaked the area with over an inch of rain in many locations (BWI, 1.53"; IAD, 1.52"). Gusty winds accompanied the storms and resulted in numerous power outages across the region. On the following day, drier air was accompanied by strong northwest winds gusting to 50 mph, resulting in additional power outages. From the 16th-25th, relatively tranquil conditions prevailed. On the 26th-27th, a slow moving front brought heavy rains that soaked the region with more than three inches in some areas including (BWI, 3.19"). Just 24 hours later, a coastal storm impacted the region with another inch of rain resulting in the first back-to-back wetter than normal October since 1976-77 at BWI and since 1989-90 at DCA and IAD, and marked the eighth month in 2003 with above normal precipitation across the area. Through October, DCA recorded 52.28" of precipitation while BWI observed 53.09", marking the wettest January-October period since 1889 and 1979 respectively.

OCTOBER 2003 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr to date
National (DCA)	66.0	48.9	57.5	58.8	-1.3	78/12	37/24	3.93	3.22	+0.71	53.01
Baltimore (BWI)	65.8	44.4	55.1	55.4	-0.3	78/12	29/24	5.82	3.16	+2.66	53.09
Dulles (IAD)	64.9	42.6	53.8	55.0	-1.2	78/12	28/24	4.63	3.37	+1.26	56.00
Andrews AFB (ADW)	66.4	44.1	55.3	N/A	N/A	77/8*	30/24	4.01	3.60	+0.41	54.32

Other Occurrences:* October 9th, 12th

LOOKING AHEAD TO NOVEMBER: The first inch of snow in Washington.

With some locations around the Washington/Baltimore area having recorded their first frost or freeze, our attention now focuses on the first inch of snow in the local area. In Washington, the largest single November snow event occurred in 1987 when 11.5 inches blanketed DCA. This particular event also tied December 17, 1932 as the greatest single snowfall event during any astronomical autumn in Washington. The date of the first inch of snow in Washington can vary greatly from year to year. During the last 10 years, the first snow has occurred between early December and late January (except in 1997-98 when all snowfall was less than one inch). The earliest snows (>1") in Washington, D.C., took place on October 30, 1925 (2.2") and October 20, 1940, (1.4"). The earliest measurable snow ever recorded at National Airport fell on October 10, 1979 (0.3"). In contrast, DCA recorded no significant snowfall (total > 0.1") during the 1997-98 and 1972-73 seasons.

**Snow Season First 1" (or greater)
Snowfall at DCA**

2002-2003	December 5
2001-2002	January 19
2000-2001	December 19
1999-2000	January 20
1997-1998	No 1" amount recorded

**Snow Season First 1" (or greater)
Snowfall at DCA**

1998-1999	January 8
1996-1997	January 9
1995-1996	December 9
1994-1995	January 28
1992-1993	December 10