

JANUARY 2004: Much below normal temperatures and drier conditions highlighted conditions across the Washington/ Baltimore area. Monthly temperature departures of -4.4°F, -4.8°F and -3.6°F were reported at DCA, BWI and IAD, respectively, resulting in the coldest January at all three airports since 1994. DCA recorded 23 days with subnormal temperatures and a temperature departure of nearly -8°F from the 6th through month's end. Arctic air was prevalent throughout much of the month as BWI recorded 17 days with subfreezing highs and its fourth coldest January on record. DCA recorded 15 days (16 at IAD) with subfreezing highs. In addition, there were 26 days with at or below freezing lows at DCA (27 at both BWI and IAD), the most such days (tied w/ 1996) since 1994 at DCA. Many areas, including BWI and IAD, recorded lows at or below 20°F each day from the 20th through month's end. IAD plunged to a low of 2°F on the 29th and most areas recorded lows in the single digits on the 10th. Additionally, some locations recorded readings below 10°F on the 11th and 25th. In sharp contrast, very warm weather prevailed the first four days of the month with highs above 50°F, including maximum temperatures soaring into the 70s at many locations on the 4th (IAD 73°F; DCA 72°F). By month's end however, the warmth was a distant memory as the region endured its 13th month out of the last 16 with subnormal temperatures.

Drier than normal conditions were reported across the region with precipitation generally averaging between one and two inches. BWI's total of 1.26" was more than 2 inches below normal (2.21"). The month's largest winter storm dumped between 5"-8" across the area beginning on the evening of the 25th, and ending on the 27th. The long lasting event began as a steady snow, accumulating generally between 3" and 5", followed by a change to sleet, then to freezing rain and drizzle on the 26th and back to snow before the next day. The storm created hazardous driving conditions that led to numerous school closings and delays to public transportation, resulting in the early closure of federal, state, and county governments and many businesses on the 27th. The prior weekend brought a weaker storm system which produced slippery roads as snowfall totaled generally less than inch before changing to sleet and then to rain. The month's first winter event (on the 9th) produced less than half inch of snow but caused numerous accidents and transportation delays as the snow fell on untreated and cold road surfaces at the beginning of morning rush hour. January's only non-winterlike storms occurred on the 2nd and the 4th when a total of about one half inch rain was recorded across the area. January's subnormal precipitation ended eight consecutive wetter than normal months at DCA.

JANUARY 2004 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	Snow
National (DCA)	37.7	23.3	30.5	34.9	4.4	72/4	8/10	1.35	3.21	1.86	6.2
Baltimore (BWI)	34.8	20.3	27.5	32.3	4.8	63/4	6/10	1.26	3.47	2.21	8.4
Dulles (IAD)	36.2	19.9	28.1	31.7	3.6	73/4	6/11	1.41	3.05	1.64	6.0
Andrews AFB (ADW)	35.0	20.0	27.5	N/A	N/A	73/4	1/29	1.72	3.10	1.38	4.5

LOOKING AHEAD: First Back-To-Back Winters With All 3 Month's Recording Below Normal Temperatures?

As mentioned earlier, the first two month's of Winter have been colder than normal across the Washington/Baltimore area. The question arises whether February temperatures will also be below normal? If so, it would be the first back-to-back winters (2002-2003 and 2003-2004) whereby all 3 months were colder than normal since the winters of 1968-69 and 1969-70 at DCA.

Winter	December		January		February		Winter	December		January		February	
	Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.	Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.	Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.		Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.	Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.	Avg. Temp.	Dep. Nml.
2003-04	39.1	-0.4	30.5	-4.4	?	?	1985-86	36.4	-3.1	35.4	+0.5	35.3	-2.8
2002-03	37.2	-2.3	31.1	-3.8	33.7	-4.4	1984-85	45.6	+6.1	30.8	-4.1	37.8	-0.3
2001-02	45.5	+6.0	41.6	+6.7	42.6	+4.5	1983-84	36.0	-3.5	32.2	-2.7	43.8	+5.7
2000-01	31.8	-7.7	35.5	+0.6	40.9	+2.8	1982-83	45.5	+6.0	38.1	+3.2	38.7	+0.6
1999-2000	42.0	+2.5	35.9	+1.0	42.5	+4.4	1981-82	38.5	-1.0	28.1	-6.8	38.3	+0.2
1998-99	44.4	+4.9	38.2	+3.3	41.0	+2.9	1980-81	39.8	+0.3	33.0	-1.9	43.7	+5.6
1997-98	41.0	+1.5	43.0	+8.1	43.4	+5.3	1979-80	43.7	+4.2	37.2	+2.3	36.1	-2.0
1996-97	43.0	+3.5	37.0	+2.1	44.7	+6.6	1978-79	43.1	+3.6	35.1	+0.2	28.4	-9.7
1995-96	35.6	-3.9	32.9	-2.0	37.3	-0.8	1977-78	38.1	-1.4	32.5	-2.4	31.4	-6.7
1994-95	44.2	+4.7	39.6	+4.7	34.3	-3.8	1976-77	35.5	-4.0	25.4	-9.5	38.8	+0.7
1993-94	38.1	-1.4	28.8	-6.1	36.3	-1.8	1975-76	40.5	+1.0	33.9	-1.0	46.9	+8.8
1992-93	39.6	+0.1	39.7	+4.8	34.3	-3.8	1974-75	43.1	+3.6	40.9	+6.0	40.6	+2.5
1991-92	42.3	+2.8	38.2	+3.3	41.2	+3.1	1973-74	41.9	+2.4	42.9	+8.0	39.2	+1.1
1990-91	44.5	+5.0	38.6	+3.7	43.0	+4.9	1972-73	43.6	+4.1	37.6	+2.7	37.0	-1.1
1989-90	27.9	-11.6	43.6	+8.7	45.2	+7.1	1971-72	45.5	+6.0	38.5	+3.6	36.5	-1.6
1988-89	38.7	-0.8	39.9	+5.0	37.8	-0.3	1970-71	39.7	+0.2	31.3	-3.6	39.1	+1.0
1987-88	41.5	+2.0	31.0	-3.9	37.3	-0.8	1969-70	36.3	-3.2	30.0	-4.9	37.1	-1.0
1986-87	39.8	+0.3	34.7	-0.2	37.0	-1.1	1968-69	36.6	-2.9	34.2	-0.7	36.9	-1.2