

DECEMBER 1995: A persistent flow of cold Canadian air dominated the Washington/Baltimore area most of the month, resulting in the coldest December since 1989. There were 24 days with at or below normal temperatures at DCA, including 23 days with lows of 32°F or lower (the most such December days since 1989). On the 10th and 11th lows dropped into the teens across the local area and daily average temperatures were nearly 20°F below normal. In addition, there were 11 consecutive days (18th–28th) when highs failed to reach 40°F at DCA, the longest such stretch since December 1989.

After two consecutive wet months, subnormal precipitation prevailed during December across the Washington/Baltimore area. In fact, less than a tenth of an inch was reported at all five airports during the last third of the month, including 11 consecutive days (20th–30th) without measurable precipitation (≥ 0.01 "") at DCA (the longest such December period since 1988). Notable precipitation events included: the first one inch snowfall of the season at DCA (1.1") on the 9th (up to 3 inches in the northern and western suburbs), more than half an inch of rain across the local area on the 15th and a storm system on the 18th and 19th that produced a cold rain, sleet and snow before ending.

DECEMBER 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)				DepNm	Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmiT		MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	Snow
National (DCA)	42.4	28.8	35.6	39.4	-3.8	67/1	17/10	2.17	3.12	-0.95	1.3
Baltimore (BWI)	40.9	26.9	33.9	36.7	-2.8	65/1	15/11*	2.66	3.41	-0.75	2.3
Dulles (IAD)	41.1	24.8	33.0	35.4	-2.4	66/1	14/10#	2.05	3.22	-1.17	2.5
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	42.2	25.7	34.0	37	-3	67/1	14/11	2.64	3.3	-0.7	0.5
Andrew AFB (ADW)	44.2	28.8	36.5	38	-2	67/1	17/11	1.73	3.4	-1.7	1.6

Other dates of occurrence: * December 12th; # December 11th.

ANNUAL 1995: Despite a number of extreme weather events during the year, near normal annual temperatures and precipitation prevailed at most locations. The last two months of the 1994–95 winter featured an unusually warm January (2nd warmest on record at BWI and third at IAD) with variable precipitation totals, and a February with subnormal temperatures and precipitation. DCA recorded its latest first inch of snow (since 1976) on January 28th. Above normal temperatures with below normal precipitation and snowfall highlighted the Winter across the Baltimore/Washington area. Winter temperature departures of +3°F or higher were observed at four of the five airports, and both BWI and IAD recorded their fifth warmest winter on record. Slightly warmer than normal conditions dominated during Spring, accompanied by subnormal precipitation. A warmer than normal March featured eleven consecutive days with above normal temperatures (12th–22nd), including five consecutive days (13th–17th) with highs in the seventies (the most such days since 1990) at DCA. The first 90°F+ reading of the year occurred at four of the five airports (DCA, BWI, IAD and ADW) on April 19th, the earliest such reading at DCA since 1977. Notable Spring precipitation events included: 1.97" of rain at DCA on March 8th and strong thunderstorms on May 18th that spawned a tornado in Prince Georges County, MD. causing extensive property damage. Summer was marked by much above normal temperatures and subnormal precipitation due mainly to a hot July and August and a late-season drought. The most notable rainfall event occurred in late June when severe flooding afflicted central and western Virginia. Up to two feet of rain fell during a ten-day period (21st–30th) across portions of Madison County, and the resultant flooding caused more than \$100 million in property damage in central Virginia. Locally, subnormal June precipitation was observed at four of the five airports, but heavy rains on the 25th produced more than 6 inches of rain in portions of Prince Georges County, MD. Hot weather settled across the region in July and continued for the remainder of the Summer. BWI recorded the hottest July, August and Summer on record, including a record consecutive 25 days (July 12 – August 5) with 90°F+ highs. August was highlighted by a significant drought across the area which resulted in the driest such month since 1962 at DCA. There were only 2 days (5th and 6th) at DCA with measurable precipitation, yielding a monthly total of less than an inch of rain (0.88"). Most of August's precipitation total was from showers associated with the remnants of Hurricane Erin on the 6th which produced up to 2.67" of rain at BWI, but only 0.46" at DCA (the last significant precipitation for most of the local area until mid-September). In addition, there was a record 25 consecutive August days (7th–31st) without measurable precipitation in Washington. The dry weather came to an end during the Autumn. First, a thunderstorm produced nearly an inch of rain at DCA on September 9th, ending the longest period without measurable precipitation (33 days: August 7th – September 8th) in Washington. Much needed rains on Sept. 16th and 17th and again on the 24th–26th, eased the drought across the local area. A very wet October (8.65") and abundant November rains (4.77") contributed significantly to the fourth wettest Autumn (17.15") on record at DCA, and also ended the drought. Unusual and frequent severe weather prevailed during October with up to a dozen tornadoes reported across the Washington/Baltimore area. The strongest (F2) twister, spawned from the remnants of Hurricane Opal, touched down in Camp Springs, MD, destroying 15 homes and damaging 82 others. Unsettled weather during November featured the passage of a strong cold front on the 11th accompanied by heavy rain, wind gusts over 80 mph, and a dramatic temperature drop of 20°F in less than ten minutes at DCA. As the frontal system pushed through the local area, the rain changed over briefly to sleet and then to snow, yielding the first measurable snowfall of the season for most locations. The year ended on a cold note with the three major airports all recording the coldest December since 1989.

ANNUAL 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)				DepNm	Extreme/Month-Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmiT		MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	Snow
National (DCA)	66.6	49.1	57.9	58.0	-0.1	99/7–15	7/2–6	39.80	38.63	+1.17	11.9
Baltimore (BWI)	66.6	47.3	57.0	55.1	+1.9	102/7–15	5/2–6	36.93	40.76	-3.83	11.3
Dulles (IAD)	65.6	43.6	54.6	53.8	+0.6	99/8–5	-1/2–7	40.20	40.24	-0.04	20.1
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	66.2	44.9	55.5	55	+1	98/6–15*	1/2–7	45.47	41.7	+3.8	11.4
Andrew AFB (ADW)	68.2	45.2	56.7	56	+1	101/7–15	7/2–6#	41.37	42.5	-1.1	10.5

Other dates of occurrence: * August 14th; # February 7th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 1996: The snowiest year ever recorded in Washington?

With the "Blizzard of 1996" in the history books and an additional snowfall on the 12th, our attention turns to the calendar years with the most snowfall and how 1996 will rank in comparison? Below is a list of the ten snowiest calendar years in Washington since snowfall records began in 1888.

Year	Total Snowfall (in.)	Year	Total Snowfall (in.)
1899	49.8	1922	38.7
1892	48.2	1904	35.5
1966	44.3	1979	34.9
1987	42.6	1900	34.5
1935	39.4	1967	34.2