

MARCH 1995: After an excessively wet and cold March in 1993 (-5.0°F and 6.82") and again in 1994 (-1.8°F and 8.45" – second wettest March this century in Washington), a relatively tranquil progression into the first month of Spring occurred this year. Monthly temperatures averaged 2°F warmer than normal at DCA and included a stretch of 11 consecutive days (12th–22nd) with above normal readings. During this period, daily highs reached the seventies on five consecutive days (13th–17th). Seasonable temperatures with highs in the fifties and sixties occurred during the remainder of the month. Wintry weather was limited to a brief period from late in the day on the 8th through the 10th, in the wake of the month's only major storm. Temperatures plunged from the sixties early on the 8th to subfreezing readings by evening. Morning lows in the twenties were recorded on the 9th (along with bitterly cold wind chills) and again on the 10th when the extreme minimum temperature for the month (22°F) was observed at DCA.

Subnormal precipitation prevailed across the Washington/Baltimore area, with only 2.14" recorded at DCA. More than 90% of the monthly precipitation total fell on the 8th and 9th and included the wettest calendar day at DCA since late November 1993. A strong storm system on the 8th produced heavy rains that began shortly after the morning rush hour and continued into the early evening. Meanwhile, the leading edge of sharply colder air moved into the area during the afternoon, causing a rapid drop in temperatures. The rain eventually turned to sleet and snow with accumulations up to 4 inches in some of the extreme northern and western suburbs (with as much as 7" in the Shenandoah Valley) while amounts less than half an inch were observed around Washington and Baltimore. The storm generated a daily precipitation record for the 8th at DCA (1.97") and the most precipitation in any calendar day since November 28, 1993. For the next three weeks, only 0.11" of precipitation fell at DCA while less than 0.25" was measured across the remainder of the local area. March was the sixth month out of the last seven with subnormal precipitation at DCA. It was also the driest March since 1987 at both DCA and BWI, since 1986 at IAD.

MARCH 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)				Extreme/Day			Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	Snow
National (DCA)	59.1	39.2	49.2	47.2	+2.0	78/16	22/10	2.14	3.17	-1.03	0.4
Baltimore (BWI)	58.5	37.1	47.8	44.1	+3.7	77/16	22/10	2.12	3.38	-1.26	0.2
Dulles (IAD)	58.7	33.4	46.1	43.2	+2.9	77/16	20/10*	1.39	3.17	-1.78	1.8
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	59.0	33.1	47.0	44	+3	78/16	21/11	3.07	3.7	-0.6	T
Andrew AFB (ADW)	61.1	38.5	49.8	45	+5	80/16	24/10	2.78	3.6	-0.8	T

Other occurrences: * March 11th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO APRIL: Dry March=Dry Spring?

With a drier than normal March, attention now shifts to whether sufficient rainfall will occur during Spring (March–May) to provide adequate moisture necessary for a productive start to the growing season. Listed below are the ten most recent drier than normal Marches at DCA and their respective April and May precipitation totals and departures.

Year	March Tot Prec & Dep Nml (In.)	April Tot Prec & Dep Nml (In.)	May Tot Prec & Dep Nml (In.)
1990	2.57 -0.60	4.09 +1.38	5.20 +1.54
1988	2.27 -0.90	2.00 -0.71	4.50 +0.84
1987	1.54 -1.63	2.28 -0.43	2.54 -1.12
1986	0.74 -2.43	1.98 -0.73	0.75 -2.91
1985	1.88 -1.29	0.03 -2.68	5.79 +2.13
1982	2.64 -0.53	3.19 +0.48	5.11 +1.45
1981	1.49 -1.68	2.63 -0.08	3.42 -0.24
1979	2.45 -0.72	1.88 -0.83	3.55 -0.11
1977	2.17 -1.00	2.66 -0.05	1.73 -1.93
1976	2.51 -0.66	1.17 -1.54	3.57 -0.09