

NOVEMBER 1995: The calendar may have said November, but temperatures across the Washington/Baltimore area were more like those normally recorded during the winter months. The average monthly temperature at DCA was +3.1°F, making it the second coldest November in Washington since 1917. A persistent upper-air pattern of ridging over the West and troughing over the East brought cold Canadian air into the eastern third of the U.S. including the local area, with our monthly departures between -4°F and -7°F. There were 25 days with at or below normal temperatures at DCA, including a string of 23 consecutive such days (4th-26th). During this period, there were several days when highs across the area struggled to the lower forties (readings more typical of January) and one day when the mercury failed to hit 40°F (39°F on the 29th; the lowest maximum temperature in November since 1989). The first freezing temperature of the season was recorded across most of the local area on the 5th. In addition, DCA observed 14 days with lows at or below 32°F, the most such November days (tied with 1951) since 1917. A dramatic temperature drop occurred on the 11th with passage of a strong cold front. DCA reported a reading of 66°F at 6 P.M., but three hours later the temperature had plunged to 33°F, including a drop of 20°F in less than 10 minutes.

Above normal precipitation (4-6 inches) was recorded across the Washington/Baltimore area, with most of the precipitation falling during the first half of the month. The aforementioned cold front on the 11th was initially accompanied by heavy rains, but as cold air swept in behind the front, the rain quickly changed over to sleet and snow that was occasionally accompanied by lightning in some areas. In addition, strong wind gusts (up to 80 mph) downed trees and powerlines, knocking out power to thousands of customers. A strong coastal storm on the 14th and 15th produced more than an inch of rain (occasionally mixed with sleet and snow) in Washington, up to an inch of slush in the northern and western suburbs, and as much as 2 feet of snow in the mountains. Measurable snow (just under 4 inches at IAD, 0.3" at DCA) fell across most of the area on the morning of the 29th as a cold rain that began on the 28th changed over to frozen precipitation after midnight.

NOVEMBER 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	Dep	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	Dep	Snow
National (DCA)	50.7	35.5	43.1	49.8	-6.7	73/3	28/23	4.77	3.12	-1.65	0.5
Baltimore (BWI)	51.4	33.8	42.6	46.8	-4.2	75/3	24/23	4.12	3.32	-0.80	1.0
Dulles (IAD)	49.3	30.0	39.7	45.4	-5.7	72/3	20/22	4.75	3.30	-1.45	3.6
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	51.0	32.5	41.7	47	-5	73/3	24/26	5.57	3.0	+2.6	T
Andrew AFB (ADW)	53.1	35.9	44.5	N/A	N/A	76/3	28/26	4.92	3.3	-1.6	1.0

AUTUMN (SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER) 1995: Autumn began in the midst of an unprecedented dry spell in Washington [33 consecutive days (August 7-September 8) without measurable precipitation at DCA]. However, a slightly wetter than normal September, a very wet October, and abundant November precipitation all combined to make this Fall the fourth wettest such season on record at Washington. DCA recorded over 17 inches of precipitation, nearly twice the seasonal normal. Much of this Autumn's precipitation at DCA fell during October when strong thunderstorms dropped a monthly total of 8.65". Ironically, much of the month was sunny, but when rain occurred it was generally heavy and usually accompanied by severe weather. Up to a dozen tornadoes touched down during October in the metropolitan region, including a violent F2 twister in Camp Springs, MD that caused extensive property damage. September was relatively tame in comparison, with the most noteworthy precipitation events occurring on the 9th (record dry spell ended at DCA) and the 16th and 17th (moisture from the remnants of Pacific Hurricane Ismael). Above normal precipitation prevailed again in November and included a wintry mixture across much of the local area and the first measurable snowfall of the season.

Seasonal temperatures averaged near to slightly below normal at the three major airports. September commenced with unusually warm weather with highs at or above 90°F on seven of the first 14 days at DCA. BWI recorded the warmest September since 1980. During the last half of the month, readings dropped off to those more typical of late Fall and the month ended slightly cooler than normal. The warmest October in five years prevailed across the area (warmest since 1984 at BWI) with monthly departures between +2°F and +5°F at the five airports. As mentioned earlier, November was the coldest such month in about 20 years at DCA. Daily highs were often in the forties (15 days), and there were 14 days when lows dropped to 32°F or lower, producing a monthly departure of nearly 7°F below normal at DCA.

AUTUMN 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Mth-Day		Precipitation (In)		
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm
National (DCA)	67.5	50.1	58.8	60.3	-1.5	95/9-1	28/11-23	17.15	9.45	+7.70
Baltimore (BWI)	68.0	48.0	58.0	57.3	+0.7	94/9-1*	24/11-23	13.65	9.71	+3.94
Dulles (IAD)	66.6	43.4	55.0	55.9	-0.9	93/9-6#	20/11-22	14.00	9.86	+4.14
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	67.4	45.4	56.4	58	-2	94/9-1	24/11-26	18.15	10.0	+8.2
Andrew AFB (ADW)	69.7	49.6	59.6	N/A	N/A	97/9-1	28/11-26	14.97	10.2	+4.8

Other dates of occurrence: * September 6th; # September 14th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER: Subnormal December Snowfall Again?

Since 1974, there have only been two Decembers (1982 & 1989) with above normal snowfall at DCA. In 1991 and last year, there was no recorded snowfall at DCA. Below is a list of December snowfall from 1974-1994 at DCA [Normal December Snowfall at DCA: 3.1"]:

Year	Snowfall (In.)	Year	Snowfall (In.)	Year	Snowfall (In.)
1994	0	1988	1.2	1982	6.6
1993	2.6	1987	Trace	1981	1.7
1992	1.0	1986	Trace	1980	0.3
1991	0	1985	0.7	1979	Trace
1990	3.0	1984	0.3	1978	Trace
1989	9.0	1983	Trace	1977	0.2