

February 2010

Temperatures: Subnormal temperatures were observed throughout the area with negative departures of -3.9°F at DCA and IAD, and -4.6°F at BWI. Readings were consistently cold. BWI's monthly maximum of 46°F was its coldest ever; DCA tied with 1934 for coldest and IAD observed its chilliest monthly maximum since 1969. BWI and IAD recorded 5 days with subfreezing highs and DCA observed 3. Minimum readings at DCA were below freezing the first 17 days of the month and on all but 3 days at IAD and 4 days at BWI. The month's coldest readings occurred on the 1st and 7th when temperatures dropped into the single digits in some suburban locations, including 6°F on the 1st and 7°F on the 7th at IAD.

Precipitation: The month was highlighted by unprecedented snowfall breaking all-time records for monthly and seasonal totals. Monthly totals were 32.1" at DCA (2nd greatest in Washington, exceeded only in February 1899), 49.7" at BWI and 46.1" at IAD. Snow water equivalent amounts were variable and impacted monthly liquid totals with amounts generally between 2"-5". Almost all the month's snowfall occurred between the 2nd-10th during three storms. The first event began late on the 2nd and ended overnight. Most of the area measured 4"-6" with 9.5" recorded in Gainesville (Prince William County), VA, and 7.0" in Wolfsville, (Frederick County), MD. The second event, named "Snowmageddon" by President Obama, dropped 20"-30" throughout the area with some locations recording more than 3' of snow. The snow began in earnest the afternoon of the 5th, becoming heavy by evening, continuing at 1"-2" per hour into the morning on the 6th before ending late afternoon. Blizzard conditions occurred in Ann Arundel and St. Mary's Counties on the 6th as winds gusted to 35 mph or greater, causing blowing, drifting snow and reducing visibilities to less than ¼ mile. The storm forced all area airports to close, made roads impassable, and knocked out power to more than 200,000 customers. The Federal government was closed for nearly a week and schools for more than a week. Maryland and Virginia declared states of emergency. The 2-day storm total broke all-time records at IAD: 32.4"; BWI, 24.8"; DCA's 17.8" was exceeded only by the 18.7" in February 1979. Additional unprecedented totals included 38.3" in Elkridge (Howard County), MD, 34.5" in Leesburg, (Loudoun County), VA, and 27.5" at American University in Washington, D.C. Just 3 days later, a rare blizzard occurred across the area with wind driven snow on the 10th and winds gusting greater than 35 mph, reducing visibility to less than ¼ mile and creating whiteout conditions. The whiteout forced snowplows off the roads for a time. Snowfall totals included 26.0" in Westminster (Carroll County), MD, and 14.0" in Lucketts (Loudoun County). Wind-blown snow created drifts as great as 6' in some areas. Record snow depths on the 11th were reported across the area including 45" at Pasadena (Ann Arundel County), MD, 31" at BWI and 26" at IAD. Snow depth of at least an inch was measured at DCA on 21 days, 23 days at BWI and 25 days at IAD. Fortunately, minimal rainfall with moderate temperatures kept snow melt at a rate that minimized the threat of flooding.

FEBRUARY 2010 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (Inches)				
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNml	Max	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Snow	Yr to Date
National (DCA)	40.1	28.3	34.2	38.1	-3.9	50/21	16/7	2.12	2.63	-0.51	32.1	3.68
Baltimore (BWI)	37.7	24.1	30.9	35.5	-4.6	46/21,28	11/7,15	4.15	3.02	+1.13	50.0	6.39
Dulles (IAD)	38.6	23.2	30.9	34.8	-3.9	50/21	6/1	4.63	2.77	+1.86	46.1	6.64

Winter (December-February) Temperatures: For the 4th time since 2000, subnormal temperatures were reported across the area with negative departures of -1.2°F at DCA, -2.0°F at BWI, and -0.9°F at IAD. December ended a mild autumn and brought cold temperatures to the region. DCA finally recorded its first subfreezing temperature of the season on the 6th (30°F). The month's warmest day was the 3rd when highs reached at or above 60°F at most locations including DCA's 65°F. The month's coldest readings occurred on December 24 in many areas, including at IAD and BWI, where minimums of 13°F and 14°F, respectively were observed; DCA's monthly minimum was 23°F on the 30th. In January, consistently cold temperatures occurred from the 2nd -12th when maximum readings remained below 40°F, with winds up to 49 mph on January 2. January ended with the coldest minimum temperatures of the month when some suburban locations plummeting into the single digits, including 8°F at BWI. In between these two Arctic blasts, highs reached into the mids 60s across the area including 68°F at DCA. For February, see monthly summary above.

Winter Precipitation: All-time record seasonal snowfall was observed throughout the region including the three major airports. Totals through the end of February included 50" at DCA, 80.4" at BWI and 73.2" at IAD. Monthly snowfall records for December were established at DCA and BWI and all-time monthly records were broken for February at BWI and IAD when the area was impacted with unprecedented amounts of snowfall. December started the area's snowiest winter ever with an unprecedented snowstorm on 18th-19th. Accumulations included 16.4" at DCA, 21.1" at BWI and 18.0" at IAD. The storm was tied with February 2003 as Washington's 6th greatest snowstorm and was the greatest December snowstorm recorded throughout the area. All three airports measured their greatest snow depth ever observed in December on the 20th: 16" at DCA; 18" at BWI and IAD. Monthly record snowfall totals included 16.6" at DCA, 23.2" at BWI, and 21.4" at IAD, 2nd greatest ever and highest amount since 1966. A state of emergency was declared throughout the metro area because the storm significantly impacted transportation, making many roads impassable, closing DCA and BWI and limiting IAD to one open runway at the height of the storm. The seasons first snowfall occurred on December 5th with totals up to 7.5". The month ended wet with additional snow, sleet and then rain. January featured two significant storms. The first, which occurred from the 24th-25th, included heavy rains, with flooding in the Shenandoah and strong winds up to 58 mph. A moderate snowfall impacted the area on the 30th with 5"-8" across the metro area with snowfall amounts greater south and east of Washington. December-January was the first occurrence with consecutive months recording above normal snowfall at the three major airports since 1963-64 at DCA. For February, see monthly summary above.

WINTER 2009-2010 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (Inches)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmIT	DepNml	Max	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Snow
National (DCA)	42.3	29.3	35.8	37.5	-1.2	68/1-25	16/1-3,31, 2-7	10.47	8.89	+1.58	50.0
Baltimore (BWI)	40.4	25.2	32.8	34.8	-2.0	66/1-25	8/1-31	14.45	9.30	+5.15	80.4
Dulles (IAD)	41.0	25.3	33.2	34.1	-0.9	65/1-25	6/2-1	12.62	9.89	+2.73	73.2

Looking Ahead to March—a month of extremes. Below is a list of some notable March statistics for Washington since 1871.

Temperature Extremes			Precipitation Extremes		
Coldest: 1885	Avg. Temp.: 34°F	Dep. Nml.: -12°F	Wettest: 1891	Tot. Prec.: 8.84"	Dep. Nml.: +5.24"
Warmest: 1921, 1945	Avg. Temp.: 55°F	Dep. Nml.: +9°F	Driest: 1910	Tot. Prec.: 0.57"	Dep. Nml.: -3.03"
Extreme Minimum: 4°F (March 4, 1873)			Snowiest: 1914		
Extreme Maximum: 93°F (March 23, 1907)			Tot. Snowfall: 19.3"		
Most days with: lows < 32°F: 24 (1960); highs > 90°F: 3 (1907)			Dep. Nml.: +17.7"		
			Most precipitation in one day (liquid): 2.79" (March 9, 1881)		
			Most snowfall in one day: 11.3" (March 29, 1942)		