

January 2010

Temperatures: The first month of the new decade featured above normal temperatures across the area with positive departures of +0.4°F at DCA and BWI, and +1.7°F at IAD. In Washington, this marked the 13th winter month (December-February) out the past 17 with above normal readings. Consistently cold temperatures occurred from the 2nd -12th when maximum readings remained below 40°F. The cold snap included 2 days (2nd, 3rd as well as the 4th at IAD) with subfreezing highs accompanied by very strong winds resulting in wind chill values between 0°F-10°F. Chevy Chase Village in D.C. recorded winds gusted to 49 mph on the 2nd and Reston, VA, measured 48 mph on the 3rd, resulting in tree damage and signal disruptions across Northern Virginia as well as trees blocking Rte. 410 in Prince Georges County and a portion of Rte. 70 in Frederick County, MD, according to press reports. Another push of Arctic air closed the month as highs remained below freezing across the area on the 29th and 30th and also on the 31st at BWI, among other locations. DCA's 4 days with subfreezing highs were the most observed in any month since February 2007, which also observed 4 subfreezing days in a row. January ended with the coldest minimum temperatures of the month when some suburban locations plummeting into the single digits, including 8°F at BWI.

A pronounced January thaw occurred from the 14th-28th with above normal temperatures across the area. Highs reached well into the 60s on the 25th including 68°F at DCA, 66°F at BWI and 65°F at BWI. Highs at or above 50°F occurred on 8 days at DCA, BWI, and IAD during this period.

Precipitation: While well below normal precipitation occurred throughout the immediate metro area, significantly greater totals occurred south and west of Washington with monthly totals in excess of 6". Washington's total of 1.56" (-1.65") was its 12th driest January since 1887. BWI reported 2.24" (-1.23") and IAD 2.01" (-1.04"). The month featured two significant storms. The first storm, which occurred from the 24th-25th, included heavy rains, with flooding in the Shenandoah and strong winds. The event produced a narrow but strong line of heavy downpours during the early morning hours on the 25th across areas of Augusta, Page, Nelson, and Madison Counties in Virginia. Rainfall totals included 5.79" near Stuarts Draft (Augusta County), 5.60" in Montebello (Nelson County) and 4.06" near Crozet (Augusta County). The heavy rain resulted in flash flooding and water rescues in Staunton, VA. Meanwhile, high winds impacted the metro area with gusts to 58 mph near Annapolis, MD (Anne Arundel County), 55 mph near Mt Airy (Carroll County), and 51 mph near Reston, VA (Fairfax County). Rainfall totals included 3.20" in Wolfsville, MD (Frederick County) and 2.36" near Somerset in Washington, D.C.

The second major event of the month was a significant snowfall on the 30th, during which snow developed across the southern suburbs in the early morning hours then moved steadily across the remainder of the metro area, becoming moderate to heavy at times, diminishing during the evening. The storm, while occurring on a weekend, had a major impact on transportation because roads conditions became hazardous and numerous flights were delayed or cancelled at the three major airports. Snowfall amounts were greatest south and east of Washington and included 15.2" in Ridge, MD (St. Mary's County) and 11.8" near Scottsville, VA (Albemarle County). Locally, DCA measured 6.4", BWI, 5.5", and IAD, 4.5". December-January was the first occurrence with consecutive months recording above normal snow at the three major airports since 1963-64 at DCA, 1995-96 at IAD and 2003-04 at BWI.

Additional storm systems during the month included between 1/2"-3/4" rainfall in many locations on the 17th and a light snowfall on the 8th with amounts generally between of 1"-3" across the area.

JANUARY 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)	42.5	28.0	35.3	34.9	+0.4	68/25	16/3,31	1.56	3.21	-1.65	7.4
Baltimore (BWI)	40.9	24.4	32.7	32.3	+0.4	66/25	8/31	2.24	3.47	-1.23	7.5
Dulles (IAD)	41.5	25.3	33.4	31.7	+1.7	65/25	11/31	2.01	3.05	-1.04	5.7

Looking Ahead: Does a snowy December/January lead to a snowy February? Listed below are the most recent 10 years when December and January measured above normal snowfall in Washington and the subsequent February snowfall totals in inches.

Year	2009/10	1981/82	1963-64	1960-61	1947-48	1945-46	1939-40	1934-35	1921-22	1917-18
December Snowfall	16.6	1.7	6.4	8.7	3.6	10.3	4.4	3.0	5.5	6.8
January Snowfall	7.4	15.3	8.9	13.6	12.1	6.8	15.3	24.4	31.5	22.6
February Snowfall	?	5.3	11.7	18.0	7.7	4.5	4.3	3.5	3.0	1.5