

OCTOBER 2004: Near normal temperatures and subnormal rainfall highlighted weather conditions across the Washington/Baltimore area. Monthly temperature departures were between -0.5°F and +0.5°F at most locations, including the three major airports. The most consistent period of warm weather occurred the first 10 days of the month when most locations recorded highs at or above 70°F on all but two days (5th and 6th). Cooler conditions prevailed during the following two weeks with highs mainly in the 60's from the 11th-18th and the 50's from the 19th-25th. The area observed warmer than normal temperatures during the last six days of the month. Halloween, the last day of the month, brought the area's maximum readings, with highs in the upper 70's to low 80's at many locations, including a reading of 81°F at IAD (tied daily record) and 79°F at DCA. In sharp contrast, the season's first freeze occurred on the 18th in the far northern and western suburbs with a low of 31°F recorded at IAD. The month featured many more days with minimum temperatures in the mid to upper 30's (6th, 12th, 13th, 17th, and 23rd).

In sharp contrast to October 2003, much drier than normal conditions prevailed with rainfall totals generally between 1" and 2" at most locations. Monthly precipitation departures at the three major airports were -1.48" at DCA, -1.72" at BWI and -2.32" at IAD. Despite the dry October weather, January-October 2004 precipitation totals were still near normal at most locations. Drier than normal conditions are not unusual in October (see cover graphic) with below normal rainfall in five of the last seven Octobers at DCA. Through the first 10 months of 2004, DCA's precipitation total of 34.94" is +1.56" above normal and BWI's total of 37.72" is +2.13". Despite many days with measurable rainfall (≥ 0.01 ") across the local area (13 at BWI), the majority of the month's rainfall resulted from three storms. On the 2nd, a small cluster of strong thunderstorms moved southward from western Montgomery County, MD, into the District of Columbia and Alexandria, VA. The early evening storms dropped heavy rainfall in a short period, including 0.84" at DCA. An unsettled period of weather from the 13th-16th produced generally less than 0.25" of rain at many locations, but the most daily precipitation for the month fell at BWI on the 14th when localized heavy showers dumped more than half an inch of rain (0.53"). The third storm system provided rainy conditions from the 19th-22nd, with totals generally between 0.50" and 0.75" (0.63" at DCA; 0.61" at IAD) at most locations.

OCTOBER 2004 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In.)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr to Date
National (DCA)	65.7	50.8	58.3	58.8	-0.5	79/31	41/18	1.74	3.22	-1.48	34.94
Baltimore (BWI)	64.5	46.3	55.4	55.4	0.0	77/8	33/18	1.44	3.16	-1.28	37.72
Dulles (IAD)	65.6	45.5	55.5	55.0	-0.1	81/31	31/18	1.05	3.37	-2.32	33.08
Andrews (ADW)	64.0	47.0	55.5	N/A	N/A	77/31	34/13*	1.49	3.60	-2.11	34.48

Additional Occurrences: *30

LOOKING AHEAD TO NOVEMBER: *When will the first snow fall?* In Washington, the largest single November snow event occurred in 1987 when 11.5" blanketed DCA. This particular event also tied December 17, 1932, as the greatest single snowfall event during any astronomical autumn in Washington. The date of the first inch of snow in Washington can vary greatly from year to year. During the last 10 years, the first snow has occurred between early December and late January (except in 1997-98 when all snowfall was less than one inch). The earliest snows (>1") in Washington, D.C., took place on October 30, 1925 (2.2") and October 20, 1940, (1.4"). The earliest measurable snow ever recorded at DCA fell on October 10, 1979 (0.3"). In contrast, DCA recorded no significant snowfall (total > 0.1") during the 1997-98 and 1972-73 seasons.

**Snow Season First 1" (or greater)
Snowfall at DCA**

2003-2004	December 4
2002-2003	December 5
2001-2002	January 19
2000-2001	December 19
1999-2000	January 20

**Snow Season First 1" (or greater)
Snowfall at DCA**

1997-1998	No 1" amount recorded
1998-1999	January 8
1996-1997	January 9
1995-1996	December 9
1994-1995	January 28