

January 2006

Temperatures for the Baltimore-Washington area consistently stayed above normal soon after the start of astronomical Winter through the end of January. The abnormal warmth produced monthly temperature departures of +8.1°F at DCA; +9.2°F at BWI, and +10.1°F at IAD, resulting in the 7th warmest January (tied with 1998) in Washington, second warmest at BWI (warmest since 1990) and warmest January ever observed at IAD. Even though no record highs were set at DCA, readings were consistently above normal. DCA observed 9 days with highs at or above 60°F, the most such days (tied with 1974) since 1950. In all, DCA marked 16 days with highs 50°F or greater and only two days with below normal temperatures (7th and 26th); BWI and IAD observed subnormal readings only on the 7th. Minimum readings were at or below freezing on only 11 days at DCA, the fewest such days since 1998. The monthly minimum was a relatively mild 23°F, the highest January extreme minimum temperature since 1990.

Precipitation was near to slightly below normal with negligible snowfall. Monthly precipitation totals ranged from about 2.50" to 3.50" across most of the area. IAD's total of 2.40" yielded a monthly departure of -0.65", the only deficit at the three major airports. The month's most significant rainfall occurred overnight from the 22nd to 23rd when some locations measured greater than an inch, including BWI (1.05"). DCA recorded just under an inch (0.98"). Morning showers on the 18th resulted in totals between 0.50" to an inch across the region (0.79" at BWI). At times the January precipitation pattern was more similar to spring than mid-winter, with the area recording thunderstorms on as many as three days (early morning hours on the 3rd, 14th and evening of the 24th). Warm conditions limited snowfall to trace amounts across most of the area. Upper Montgomery County, MD recorded 0.2" of snow on the 14th when rain briefly changed to snow. Flurries were observed on the 25th and 26th. In all, only a trace of snow was reported at the three major airports for the month, the least snowfall in Washington since 1998 and at BWI and IAD since 1973.

While rapidly moving storm systems limited significant precipitation totals, windy conditions were prevalent. Winds gusted to over 50 mph across the area on the 14th. DCA recorded wind speeds of up to 54 mph. Gusts to 63 mph were measured in Boston (Culpeper County) and to 60 mph in southern Maryland at Solomons Island. Two injuries in Prince Georges County resulted when a tree limb fell on to a Metrobus, according to press reports. High wind reportedly left as many as 30,000 customers without power in the Washington area as a result of downed trees and power lines. Strong winds impacted the area again on the 25th with gusts over 40 mph observed at all three major airports.

JANUARY 2006 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In.)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	Max	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Snow
National (DCA)	51.2	34.9	43.0	34.9	+ 8.1	65/21	25/7	3.25	3.21	+0.04	Trace
Baltimore (BWI)	51.2	31.9	41.5	32.3	+ 9.2	64/21	21/7 ¹	3.48	3.47	+0.01	Trace
Dulles (IAD)	51.5	32.1	41.8	31.7	+10.1	65/30	21/7	2.40	3.05	-0.65	Trace
Andrews (ADW)	50.0	34.0	42.0	N/A	N/A	64/9 ²	21/7	2.63	3.10	-0.47	0.0

Other Occurrences: ¹27, ²21 and 30

Looking Ahead to February: Warm January = Warm February? Does an unusually warm January yield a warmer than normal February? Below is a list of the 10 warmest Januaries and the corresponding February average temperatures at DCA.

Year	Jan. Avg. Temp. (°F)	Dep. Nml. (°F)	Feb. Avg. Temp. (°F)	Dep. Nml. (°F)
1950	48.0	+13.1	38.7	+0.6
1932	46.8	+11.9	42.9	+4.8
1890	43.8	+8.9	36.6	+5.3
1937	43.8	+8.9	43.4	-1.5
1913	43.6	+8.7	36.6	-1.5
1990	43.6	+8.7	45.2	+7.1
1998	43.0	+8.1	43.4	+5.3
2006	43.0	+8.1	?	?
1974	42.9	+8.0	39.2	+1.1
1933	42.6	+7.7	43.8	+0.3
1949	42.6	+7.7	38.4	+5.7