

SEPTEMBER 2006

Temperature: After a hot summer, much cooler conditions prevailed across the Washington/Baltimore area during the first month of meteorological Autumn. All three major airports recorded monthly temperature deficits (-2.7F at DCA, -2.0°F at BWI and -1.7°F at IAD). This cool September resulted in the first month with subnormal readings at BWI and IAD since December 2005 and only the second cooler than normal month this year at DCA. Unsettled or stormy conditions yielded many days with subnormal maximum temperature readings across the local area. DCA recorded 8 days with highs below 70°F, the most such days (tied with 1963) since 1962, while BWI noted 11 such days and IAD, 9.

In sharp contrast to July and August, there were no days of intense heat or humidity. In fact, DCA's monthly maximum temperature reading of 85°F on the 9th was its coolest since 1950. Minimum temperatures were pleasantly cooler as well. DCA recorded its warmest low for the month (70°F) on the 24th, compared to 10 days with minimum temperatures at or above 70°F in August. Most locations recorded lows in the 40's on several days, including 6 such days at IAD; BWI's low was 42°F on the month's final day.

Precipitation: The dry conditions from Mid-July through August ended abruptly as September began with the remnants of Tropical Storm Ernesto moving through the local area on the 1st. While the immediate metro areas received over 2" of rain along with gusty winds to 40 mph, the greatest impacts were felt south and east of the Washington/Baltimore area. Nearly 5" of rain soaked Annapolis, while closer to the storm system King George County, in Virginia's Northern Neck, measured 7.75" of rain and St. Mary's County, MD, received 6.92". Winds gusted to 58 mph at Ocean City, MD, where storm surge eroded the beach in many locations, flooded coastal marshes and caused some property damage. In addition, 94,000 customers lost power in Virginia and 74, 000 in Maryland, according to press reports.

Just a few days later, on the 5th, another significant storm system brought a soaking rain to the area with amounts between 1.5" to 2" recorded at most locations. On the 14th, a steady rain, moderate at times, resulted in amounts between .5" to 1" at most locations.

The months' final major storm brought severe weather to parts of the area during the evening of the 28th. A line of heavy showers and thunderstorms became severe as it approached Chesapeake Bay. The system spawned a tornado that struck Severna Park in Anne Arundel County, MD. Winds were measured at 90 mph (F1 on the Fujita Scale). One injury was reported and 33 homes were severely damaged by falling trees, with 13 homes destroyed, according to press reports. The tornado was 250 yards wide and traveled two miles before lifting in Pasadena. Damaging winds from the thunderstorms were also observed near Baltimore, in Bowie, and in Harford County; areas in Northern Virginia impacted by the storms included Warrenton, Franconia and near Manassas. More than an inch of rain was recorded in some locations including DCA (1.04") and BWI (1.03"). Penny size hail struck Bowie, MD. It was the first occurrence of thunderstorms at many locations since the first week in August.

SEPTEMBER 2006 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In.)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	Max	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr. to Date
National (DCA)	74.9	60.7	67.8	70.5	-2.7	85/9	50/21 ¹	6.31	3.79	+2.52	35.99
Baltimore (BWI)	74.2	56.7	65.4	67.4	-2.0	84/9	42/30	7.56	4.01	+3.58	29.36
Dulles (IAD)	74.6	56.6	65.6	67.3	-1.7	84/9 ²	43/21 ¹	7.12	3.82	+3.30	34.01
Andrews (ADW)	73.8	58.0	65.9	N/A	N/A	83/18	44/30	8.12	3.60	+4.52	26.05

Other Occurrences: ¹30

Looking Ahead to October: The first freeze! October traditionally marks the first freeze in suburban locations. When will the Washington/Baltimore area record its first freeze in 2005? Below is a list of the first 32°F or lower readings at DCA and IAD in the last 10 years.

Year	First 32°F (or lower) reading		Year	First 32°F (or lower) reading	
	DCA	IAD		DCA	IAD
2005	November 17	November 11*	2000	November 16	October 8
2004	December 4	October 18	1999	November 18	October 28
2003	November 10	October 3	1998	November 5	October 2
2002	November 27	October 18	1997	November 16	October 2
2001	December 22*	October 9	1996	November 12	October 12

*Latest date for first freeze ever recorded