

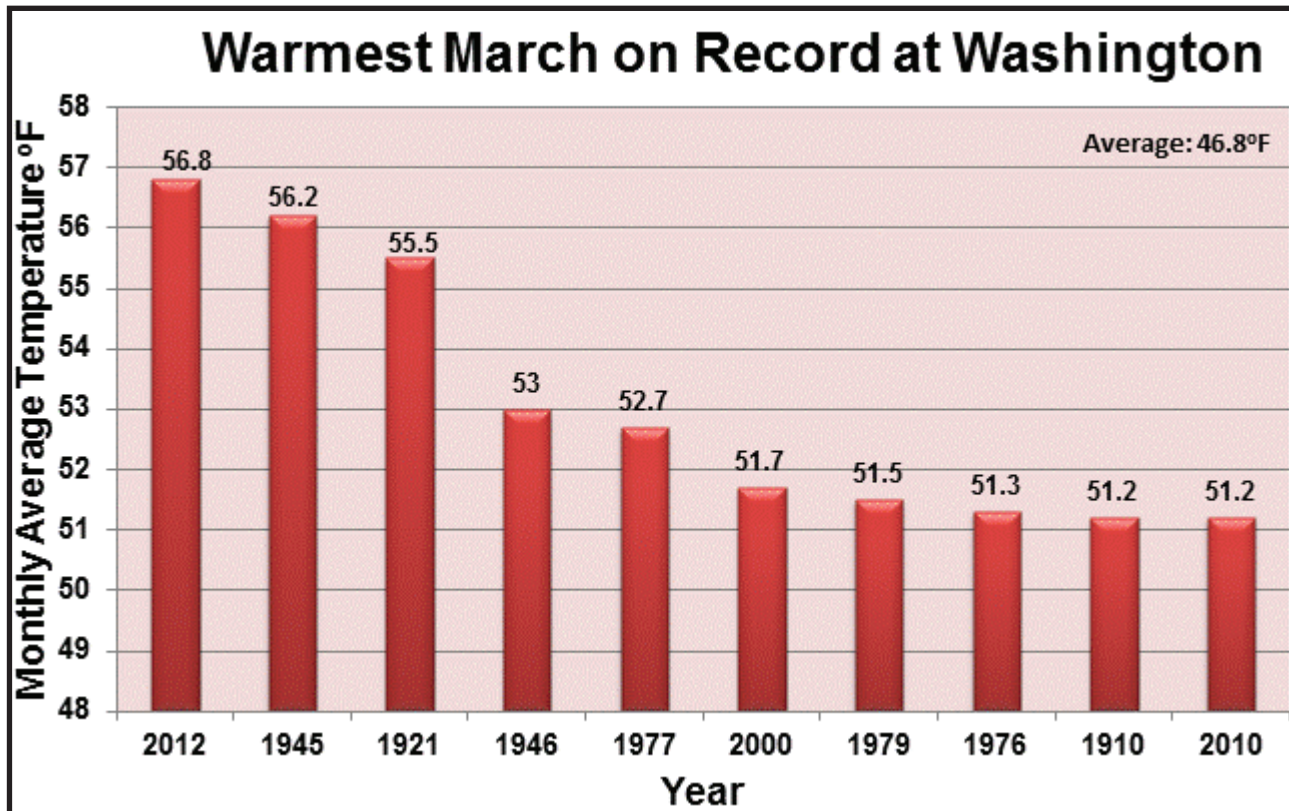


# PRESTO

PREcipitation Summary and Temperature Observations  
For the Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD Area



## MARCH 2012: Unprecedented Warm Month In Washington; Dry Conditions Across Metro Area



### March Highlights

- ☛ Warmest average temperature on record in Washington, 56.8°F; IAD (54.3°F); 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest at BWI (55.7°F) and warmest since 1945
- ☛ IAD average maximum of 65.9°F was warmest on record, while DCA (66.4°F) and BWI (64.2°F) were the 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest on record and warmest since 1945
- ☛ DCA (47.2°F) and IAD (42.7°F) recorded their warmest average minimum temperatures on record
- ☛ Highs at or above 70°F on 14 days at DCA, 11 days at BWI and IAD
- ☛ Daily minimum temperature equaled or exceeded the normal daily high on 6 days at DCA, 4 days at BWI
- ☛ First consecutive month with well above normal temperatures at all three major airports
- ☛ Dry month with rainfall totals generally between 1"-2" across much of metro area; BWI's total of 1.76" was only its second March in past 25 years with less than 2" precipitation
- ☛ Soaking rainfall 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> with more than an inch in some locations, including 1.86" at the National Arboretum in Washington, 1.32" at Riviera Beach, MD, (Ann Arundel County), 0.96" near Vienna, VA (Fairfax County)
- ☛ Following on the heels of February 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> snowstorm across central Virginia, similar locations were impacted by another significant snowstorm on the 5<sup>th</sup> with 10.0" in Barbourville (Orange County), VA, and 9.0" near Eheart (Albemarle County)

## March 2012

**Temperatures:** Meteorological spring started with unprecedented, long lasting warmth across the Washington/Baltimore area. Positive departures were +10.0°F at DCA, and +10.1°F at BWI and IAD. March was the warmest on record in Washington (see graphic) with average temperature of 56.8°F (equivalent to the April average temperature) and at IAD (54.3°F), and 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest at BWI (55.7°F), warmest since 1945. The average maximum and minimum temperatures were either the highest on record or near record values. IAD average maximum of 65.9°F was an all-time March record while average maximums at DCA (66.4°F) and BWI (64.2°F) were the 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest on record and warmest since 1945. IAD recorded 5 days with highs at or above 80°F; DCA recorded 4 such days. DCA's maximum of 82°F on the 15<sup>th</sup> set a new record for the date. IAD broke high temperatures records on the 15<sup>th</sup> (84°F) and 19<sup>th</sup> (76°F), and equaled a record on the 23<sup>rd</sup> (83°F).

DCA (47.2°F) and IAD (42.7°F) recorded their warmest average minimum temperatures on record. High minimum temperatures were either tied or set on 4 days in Washington and on 8 days at IAD, including each day from the 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>.

**Precipitation:** Well below normal precipitation was observed across the metro region with monthly amounts between 1"-2" measured at the three major airports. Washington's total of 1.02" (-2.46" monthly departure) was its 6<sup>th</sup> driest on record; BWI recorded 1.76" (-2.14" monthly departure); IAD's 1.52" total (-1.86" monthly departure) was its 7<sup>th</sup> driest on record. The month's most significant rainfall occurred during the evening and overnight from the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> when heavy showers and thunderstorms impacted the area. Rainfall totals were well over an inch in some locations, including 1.86" at the National Arboretum in Washington, 1.32" and near Riviera Beach, MD (Ann Arundel County), and close to an inch (0.96") near Vienna, VA (Fairfax County).

March did have its wintry moments. A winter storm occurred across central Virginia into southern Maryland on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Snowfall amounts were significant in central Virginia: 10.0" in Barboursville (Orange County), 9.0" near Eheart (Albemarle County) and 5.0" in Spotsylvania. This was the second snowstorm to impact this area in 2 weeks.

On the 20<sup>th</sup>, early morning heavy showers and thunderstorms soaked Frederick and Montgomery Counties, MD; Totals included 1.50" near Thurmont (Frederick County) and 1.24" near Rossmoor (Montgomery County). Later than day, isolated severe weather passed through the Shenandoah Valley, with 1.75" hail striking near Lacey Spring, VA (Rockingham County).

Five days later on the 25<sup>th</sup>, a general light rain fell across the metro area with much greater amounts further south across central Virginia. Total rainfall included 2.98" near Earlysville (Albemarle County) and in Charlottesville where some roads were flooded. Severe weather struck portions of the Shenandoah Valley on the 28<sup>th</sup> where 0.75" hail was measured near Mt. Clifton, VA, and a barn was toppled by thunderstorm winds.

### March 2012 Weather Statistics for the Washington/Baltimore Area

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (Inches)				
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	Max	MinT	Total	Nml	DepNml	Snow	Yr to Date
National (DCA)	66.4	47.2	56.8	46.8	+10.0	83/23	29/6	1.02	3.48	-2.46	T	5.54
Baltimore (BWI)	64.2	43.2	55.7	43.6	+10.1	81/23	25/6	1.76	3.90	-2.14	T	6.72
Dulles (IAD)	65.9	42.7	54.3	44.2	+10.1	84/15	21/6	1.52	3.38	-1.86	T	5.61

**Looking Ahead to April:** Last Freeze at DCA and IAD. April is usually the last month before autumn when a 32°F or lower reading occurs in Washington. The city has never recorded a freezing reading in May, although suburban areas have. Below is a list of the last 32°F or lower readings at urban DCA and suburban IAD for the last 10 years.

At DCA				At IAD			
Year	Date of last 32°F or lower reading	Year	Date of last 32°F or lower reading	Year	Date of last 32°F or lower reading	Year	Date of last 32°F or lower reading
2011	March 28 (31°F)	2006	March 23 (32°F)	2011	April 6 (30°F)	2006	April 10 (31°F)
2010	February 27 (31°F)*	2005	March 18 (31°F)	2010	April 18 (32°F)	2005	April 17 (31°F)
2009	March 24 (28°F)	2004	April 5 (31°F)	2009	April 13 (32°F)	2004	April 16 (30°F)
2008	March 9 (29°F)	2003	April 1 (32°F)	2008	April 16 (31°F)	2003	April 1 (27°F)
2007	April 9 (31°F)	2002	April 7 (32°F)	2007	April 11 (28°F)	2002	April 1 (32°F)

\*Earliest last freeze in DCA's recorded history.