

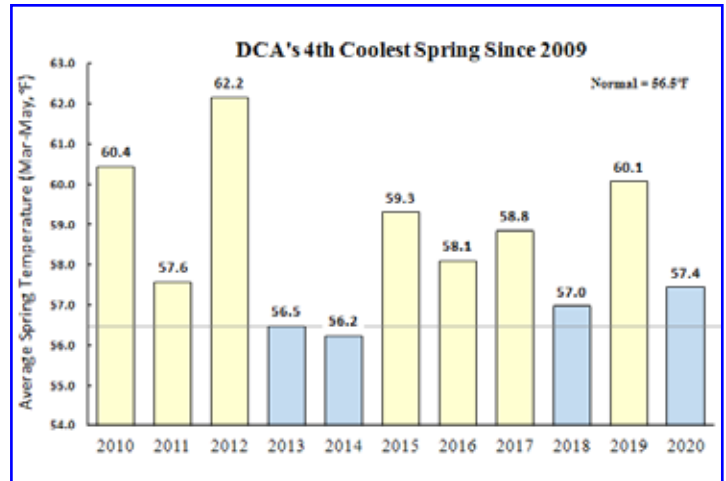
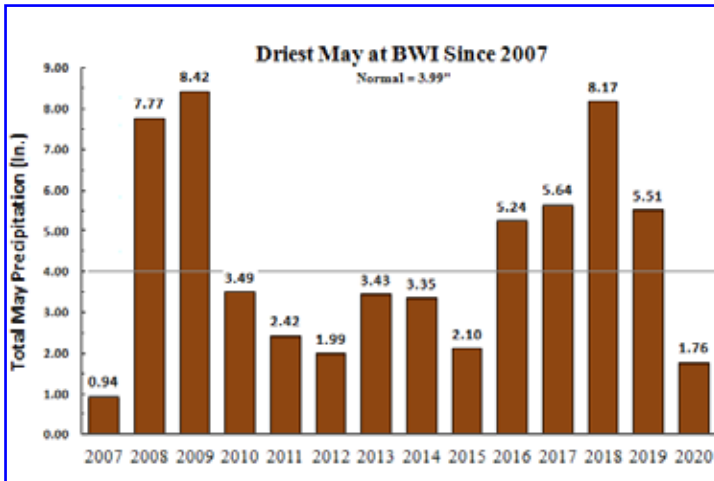


# PRESTO

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



## MAY 2020: Cooler Than Normal Temperatures; Near Normal Precipitation with Rare May Snow SPRING: Near Normal Temps and Precip with Severe Weather



### May Highlights

- Second consecutive month with below average monthly temperatures: DCA -2.2°F, BWI, -0.8, and IAD -1.7°F; First consecutive below normal months at all three stations since March and April 2018
- Coolest May at DCA since 2005 and at Dulles since 2008.
- Below average precipitation over much of the area: DCA, 62% of normal precipitation; IAD, 53%; and BWI, 44%
- On the 9<sup>th</sup>, record low maximum temperatures were set at BWI (51°F) and IAD (50°F), and tied at DCA, (52°F); a record low minimum also was set at BWI on the 9<sup>th</sup> (34°F) and the 13<sup>th</sup> (36°F).
- Late season freezes occurred outside of the metro on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Accumulating snow fell on the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains on the 9<sup>th</sup>, including 1.0" in Hightown, (Highland County), VA, and near Spruce Knob (Pendleton County), WV; flurries were reported across Maryland Piedmont including near Damascus (Montgomery County), MD, and Long Green (Baltimore County), MD, marking first May snow observed in Damascus since May 9, 1977's historic Hudson Valley snowstorm
- Damaging winds associated with a cold front caused some damage on the 8<sup>th</sup> in Charles County, MD
- Record high minimum temperatures observed at IAD on the 28<sup>th</sup> (70°F) and BWI on the 29<sup>th</sup> (73°F)
- On the 29<sup>th</sup>, severe thunderstorm winds caused damage in Jefferson County, WV, and Washington County, MD

### Spring Seasonal Highlights

- Due to a warm March, the season ended slightly warmer than normal: DCA, 57.4°F (+0.9°F), BWI 55.3°F (+1.9°F); and IAD, 54.6°F (+0.7°F)
- Below average precipitation for March and May and well above average for April. It was the 7<sup>th</sup> wettest April on record in Washington and 6<sup>th</sup> wettest at IAD; wettest April since 2014 at all three major airports.
- On March 3, a widespread severe weather event resulted in numerous reports of wind damage and trees down from straight line winds. The strongest winds occurred west of the metro with a peak gust of 68 mph measured at Hagerstown Regional Airport (Washington County), MD, 60 mph near Ridgely (Allegany County), MD, 60 mph near Petersburg (Grant County), WV, and 60 mph near Point of Rocks (Loudoun County), VA; DCA measured a 54 mph gust.
- On April 12-13, the area was impacted by severe weather, heavy rainfall, flooding and severe winds. An EF-1 tornado struck near Frizzellburg (Carroll County), MD, with estimated wind speeds of 90 mph. The maximum path width was 75 yards and path length 0.4 miles, resulting in property damage to a couple of homes, a recreational vehicle and damage to trees. Strong to severe thunderstorms caused damaging wind gusts as a tree was uprooted and blown onto a house roof near Dundalk (Baltimore County), MD, while a tree fell onto a car near Rockville (Montgomery County), MD. The heavy rainfall flooded roads resulting in home evacuations near Greenfield (Nelson County), VA. Rainfall totals were generally between 2"-3" across the region. Calendar day rainfall records occurred at all three airports on the April 13: 2.33" at DCA; 1.97" at BWI and 1.79" at IAD. Peak gusts of 63 mph were reported at Calvert Cliffs (Calvert County), MD, and 62 mph at Patuxent River Naval Air Station (St. Mary's County), MD.

## May 2020

**Temperature:** Average monthly temperature for much of the area was below average for the second month in a row: DCA, 63.8°F (-2.2°F), BWI, 62.1°F (-0.8°F) and IAD, 61.5°F (-1.7°F). April and May 2020 were the first back to back months with below average monthly temperatures for all three stations since March and April 2018. For DCA, it was the coolest May since 2005 and IAD had its coolest May since 2008. The last in a series of cold air masses entered on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The 9<sup>th</sup> saw record low maximum temperatures records set across the area, including 52°F at DCA, 51°F at BWI and 50°F at IAD. Many locations west of the metro had maximum temperatures in the 40s, including 47°F in Hagerstown, MD, and 48°F in Martinsburg, WV. BWI then set record lows on the 9<sup>th</sup> (34°F) and 13<sup>th</sup> (36°F). There were late season frosts and freezes on the 13<sup>th</sup> outside the metro area. Temperatures returned to near normal for the rest of the month including some early summer warmth late in the month resulting in record high minimum temperatures in BWI (73°F) on the 29<sup>th</sup> and IAD (70°F) on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Precipitation:** May was a dry month for most of the area: DCA, 2.49" (-1.50"); BWI, 1.76" (-2.23") and IAD, 2.40" (-1.15"). The most unusual precipitation for the month was snowfall on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Many locations in the higher elevations of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland had accumulating snow and there were even brief snow showers and flurries in areas east of the mountains. Damascus, (Montgomery County) MD, had its first May snowflakes since May 9, 1977.

From predawn on the 22<sup>nd</sup>- to predawn on 23<sup>rd</sup>, rain brought moderate totals to the metro area and 1.95" to Harrisonburg, VA, 1.89" near Criglersville (Madison County), VA, and 1.24" at Franconia (Fairfax County), VA. More significant rain fell to in some areas on the 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, with heavier 2-day totals in Virginia, including 1.41" near Batesville (Albemarle County), 1.33" near Waynesboro (Augusta County), and 1.00" in Mt. Vernon (Fairfax County). In West Virginia, 1.00" was measured near Halltown (Jefferson County). Maryland's maximum was 0.97" north of Frederick (Frederick County).

The month featured numerous windy days. On May 9, high winds blew down wires on Livingston Road in Indian Head (Prince Georges County), MD, and in parts of Charles County, MD. On May 29, thunderstorm winds resulted in downed trees and power lines in Jefferson County, WV, and in parts of Washington County, MD.

### May 2020 Weather Statistics for the Washington/Baltimore Area

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (inches)			
	AvMx	AvMin	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	Max	Min	Total	Nml	DepNml	Year to Date
National (DCA)	72.3	55.2	63.8	66.0	-2.2	87/29	37/9	2.49	3.99	-1.50	17.10
Baltimore (BWI)	71.7	52.5	62.1	62.9	-0.8	88/15,29	34/9,10	1.76	3.99	-2.23	16.42
Dulles (IAD)	71.3	51.8	61.5	63.2	-1.7	86/15,29	33/9,10	2.40	4.55	-2.15	16.52

**Spring (Mar-May) Temperatures:** The three major airports recorded slightly above normal seasonal temperatures: DCA, +57.4°F (+0.9°F); BWI, +55.3°F (+1.9°F); and IAD, +54.6°F (+0.7°F). Overall, the spring of 2020 was cool with below average temperatures despite a very warm March. Temperatures in March ranged from 6 to 8 degrees above average for most locations, making it the 5<sup>th</sup> warmest March on record for DCA and BWI and 3<sup>rd</sup> for IAD. Despite the above average readings, only March 20 set records: IAD observed a record maximum of 80°F, beating the former record 77°F set in 1976, and a record high minimum, 55°F; DCA tied a record maximum at 83°F. April and May flipped the switch and were consistently cool, reporting below average temperatures for two consecutive months at all three stations, the first such time since spring 2018. April reversed the usual pattern with much cooler than normal temperatures during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the month rather than starting cool. (May was cool, see summary above.)

**Spring Precipitation:** The season's precipitation was near normal with DCA slightly wetter than normal and BWI and IAD, slightly drier: DCA, 11.10" (+0.57"), BWI, 10.33" (-0.75"), and IAD, 9.95" (-1.45"). March was slightly wetter with minimal winter weather. Overall, precipitation was near normal for the spring. Snowfall was sparse with no accumulating snow recorded at DCA, BWI or IAD during March. In a rare twist, there was some accumulating snowfall in the higher elevations and even flurries/ snow showers in the lowlands in early May. March started the season with below normal precipitation, despite frequent rainy days. Despite these totals, almost half the month had days with measurable precipitation (15 at DCA, 14 for BWI and IAD) but the amounts were often light. The dry pattern changed in April, with the month ending as the 7<sup>th</sup> wettest such April on record in Washington and 6<sup>th</sup> wettest on record at IAD.

The spring of 2020 will be mostly remembered for its many days of strong winds, caused by either pressure gradients or convection. DCA had 13 days during the spring where the maximum sustained wind speed was >30 mph, IAD had 9 such days and BWI, 4. There were 3 days with widespread severe weather and strong winds, March 3 and April 12-13, and one day with more localized severe weather and strong winds west of the metro on May 29. On April 12-13, heavy overnight rainfall was followed the next day by severe thunderstorms and a confirmed tornado. The EF-1 tornado struck near Frizzellburg in Carroll County, MD, with estimated wind speeds of 90 mph, maximum path width, 75 yards and path length, 0.4 miles. Homes, a recreational vehicle and numerous trees were damaged but no injuries or fatalities were reported. Strong to severe thunderstorms resulted in damaging wind gusts, uprooting a tree and blowing it onto a house roof near Dundalk (Baltimore County), MD. Another tree fell on a car near Rockville (Montgomery County), MD. The heavy rain flooded roads resulting in home evacuations near Greenfield (Nelson County), VA. Rainfall totals were generally between 2"-3". Calendar day rainfall records occurred at all three major airports on April 13: DCA, 2.33", BWI, 1.97", and IAD, 1.79". Peak gusts of 63 mph were reported at Calvert Cliffs (Calvert County), MD. On April 30 over an inch to well over 2" fell, leading to more flooding in parts of the Shenandoah including Crimora (Augusta County) and Broadway (Rockingham County), VA. Damaging wind gusts from thunderstorms caused a tree to fall onto a home near Londontowne (Anne Arundel County), MD. The highest rainfall total in Maryland was 2.87" near Thurmont (Frederick County); in Virginia, 1.84" near Hughesville (Loudoun County); in West Virginia, 1.79" near Millville (Jefferson County) and in Washington, 1.91".

### Spring 2020 Weather Statistics for the Washington/Baltimore Area

Location	Station Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (inches)			
	AvMx	AvMin	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	Max	Min	Total	Nml	DepNml	Snow
National (DCA)	66.3	48.6	57.4	56.5	+0.9	87/5-29	26/3-1	11.10	10.53	+0.57	0.0
Baltimore (BWI)	65.3	45.4	55.3	53.4	+1.9	88/5-15,5-29	20/3-1	10.33	11.08	-0.75	0.0
Dulles (IAD)	65.1	44.1	54.6	53.9	+0.7	86/5-15,5-29	21/3-1	9.95	11.40	-1.45	T

**Looking Ahead to Summer:** Does a cool April/May equal a cooler than normal summer? Below is a listing of the last 10 cooler than normal April/Mays and the subsequent summer temperatures at DCA. April/May DCA average temperature is 61.5°F; Summer, 77.8°F

Average April/May Temperatures at DCA and Subsequent Average Summer Temperatures										
Year	2020	2016	2009	2007	2005	2003	1997	1996	1995	1993
April/May	59.6°F	60.4°F	61.3°F	60.7°F	59.6°F	58.4°F	58.5°F	60.4°F	61.1°F	61.1°F
Summer	?	80.5°F	76.8°F	78.3°F	78.8°F	75.9°F	77.0°F	77.1°F	79.1°F	79.3°F