

AUGUST 1995: August is typically the wettest month of the year across most of the Washington/Baltimore area; however, that was not the case this year. Extremely dry and hot weather enveloped the local region during the month, damaging crops, browning most lawns and engendering the spread of several small brush fires. DCA observed 25 consecutive days (August 7–31) with no measurable precipitation ($\geq 0.01''$), an August record and the second longest such period ever observed in Washington (longest 32 days: September 30 – October 31, 1963). The monthly rainfall total at DCA was a mere 0.88", the driest month since November 1991 and the driest August since 1962. Monthly precipitation totals across the region varied significantly, but all five airports recorded subnormal totals. Showers associated with the remnants of Hurricane Erin on the 6th provided most of the monthly precipitation across the local area. These showers dumped between 2 and 4 inches of rain on portions of Loudoun County, VA and Montgomery County, MD while amounts of an inch or less were observed in the southern suburbs. Although, BWI recorded 2.67" of rain, the largest daily total since July 1, 1987 (3.18"), their monthly precipitation total was still below normal for the eleventh consecutive month.

Abnormally hot weather persisted for a second consecutive month with departures of +3°F to +6°F recorded at four of the five airports, and average maximum temperatures of 90°F or higher were observed at all five locations. It was the hottest August on record at BWI, second at DCA (tied w/ 1978), and third at IAD. There were 24 days with at or above normal temperatures at DCA and 19 days with 90°F+ highs. DCA also set a record daily high on the 18th (97°F) and tied two others on the 14th and 16th with readings of 98°F and 95°F, respectively.

AUGUST 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)		
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm
National (DCA)	90.7	71.8	81.3	78.5	+2.8	98/4*	64/20	0.88	3.91	-3.03
Baltimore (BWI)	90.4	69.7	80.1	75.6	+4.5	100/4	60/26	2.98	3.92	-0.94
Dulles (IAD)	90.0	65.1	77.6	74.2	+3.4	99/5	54/20@	2.02	3.94	-1.92
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	90.1	65.9	78.0	75	+3	98/14	56/20#	0.69	4.4	-3.7
Andrews AFB (ADW)	92.3	69.3	80.8	75	+6	100/14	59/20	0.81	4.4	-3.6

Other dates of occurrence: * August 14th; @ August 26th; # August 21st and 26th.

SUMMER (JUNE–AUGUST) 1995: The Summer of 1995 was highlighted by abnormal heat and subnormal precipitation across the Washington/Baltimore area. There were numerous days with 90°F+ highs, high humidity, dangerous apparent temperatures, and unhealthy air quality. The summer actually began on a cool note with DCA recording slightly below normal June temperatures (Temp. Dep. Nml.: -1.0°F). This was a dramatic change from June of the previous year (hottest on record at DCA; Temp. Dep. Nml.: +3.8°F). There were only 5 June days (17 in 1994) with highs at or above 90°F at DCA. July also got off to a relatively cool start with temperatures averaging more than 2°F below normal during the first third of the month; however, weather more typical of summer in Washington enveloped the local region a short time later and persisted through August. July featured 21 days with 90°F+ highs at BWI (20 at DCA and 17 at IAD), including 20 consecutive such days (July 12–31). As a result, BWI reported its hottest July on record as monthly temperatures averaged 4.5°F above normal. At DCA, highs at or above 90°F were observed on 18 of the last 19 July days. Despite the persistent heat, very few July daily record highs were established at the three major airports. In fact, BWI reported only one (102°F on the 15th), IAD observed two (98°F on the 15th and 98°F on the 31st), and DCA recorded none. The hot weather carried over into August as highs topped 90°F on the first five days. During this period, BWI established a record for consecutive days with 90°F+ readings (25; July 12 – August 5) and also reached the century mark for the second time this year (100°F on the 4th). A brief respite from the heat occurred from the 6th–9th as highs remained in the upper seventies and lower eighties; however, a return to hot weather took place shortly thereafter and lasted until the end of the month. Once again, temperatures averaged 4.5°F above normal at BWI during August, making it the hottest such month on record and contributed to the hottest summer ever observed at that location. Both DCA and IAD reported their fifth warmest summer on record. It was also the third consecutive summer with above normal temperatures at the three major airports.

Summer precipitation was below normal at all five airports, with seasonal totals between 64% (ADW) and 84% (IAD) of normal. July was the wettest month across the local area with three of the five airports reporting above normal precipitation and all five locations recording more than 3 inches of rain. Subnormal precipitation fell across most of the local region during June, despite rainfall on eight of the last nine days of the month at most locations. During this time, some areas recorded between 1 and 3 inches of rain, but these totals were low in comparison to those recorded in Virginia's eastern Blue Ridge region as up to two feet of rain inundated portions of Madison County, VA. Numerous rivers (Rapidan, Rappahannock, Maury, Shenandoah and James) overflowed their banks, resulting in some of the worst flooding in decades. Eight counties and four cities were declared federal disaster areas. The flooding claimed eight lives and caused an estimated \$125 million in property damage. In sharp contrast, August yielded very little precipitation for much of the Washington/Baltimore area as the only significant rains fell on the 5th and 6th. The remnants of Hurricane Erin provided more than three inches of rain in some areas north and west of Washington, but less than inch in the southern suburbs. After that point, measurable precipitation failed to fall on DCA, and only scattered light amounts were recorded at the other four airports. Unfortunately, these showers did little to alleviate severe drought conditions that developed across the local area in August. The end result was the fifth consecutive drier than normal summer at DCA, BWI and ADW.

SUMMER 1995 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Mth–Day		Precipitation (In)		
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm
National (DCA)	88.1	70.1	79.1	78.1	+1.0	99/7–15	58/6–13	7.33	11.09	-3.76
Baltimore (BWI)	88.7	68.7	78.7	75.1	+3.6	102/7–15	51/6–1#	8.43	11.28	-2.85
Dulles (IAD)	87.1	64.4	75.8	73.7	+2.1	99/8–5	51/6–17	9.51	11.35	-1.84
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	87.4	65.3	76.3	74	+2	98/6–15*	51/6–17	9.24	11.9	-2.66
Andrew AFB (ADW)	89.9	69.2	79.5	75	+4	101/7–15	56/6–17	7.97	12.4	-4.43

Other dates of occurrence: * August 14th; # June 17th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SEPTEMBER: Will the record fall?

Through the end of August, DCA had recorded 25 consecutive days (August 7–31) without measurable precipitation. This is an August record (see cover graph) and also the second longest such period in Washington since records began in 1871. The longest such period ever recorded is 32 days and occurred from September 30 – October 31, 1963. For this to occur, no measurable rain must fall before the end of the day on September 8th.