

JANUARY 1995: An atypical winter weather pattern, with the polar jet displaced well north of its normal position, led to a third consecutive month of abnormal warmth across the local area. Arctic air remained well north of the region for most of the month, with only a brief intrusion during the first week (3rd–6th), when highs were mostly in the thirties. The 5th was the only day this Winter in which maximum temperatures remained at or below freezing at DCA. There were 23 January days with at or above normal readings at DCA. A mid-month warm spell yielded 10 consecutive days (12th–21st) with above freezing temperatures at DCA, including the first January 70°F+ reading (70°F on the 14th) in 20 years. There were no record daily highs at DCA, but IAD observed 4 consecutive days with such readings from the 12th–15th with highs of 63°F, 68°F, 72°F, and 65°F, respectively. In addition, IAD reported 5 days with daily record high minimum temperatures, including a low of 60°F on the 15th (39°F above normal). Monthly temperature departures exceeded +4°F at all 5 airports and in conjunction with abnormal warmth in December pushed the December 1994–January 1995 period to the warmest such two-month period on record at BWI, second at IAD, and seventh at DCA. In fact, the January 1995 average temperatures at the five airports even exceeded the typical normals for the month of December.

Monthly precipitation averaged above normal at four of the five airports, but snowfall at all five locations was below normal. Two storm systems produced about an inch of rain across the local area. The first event occurred on the 6th and started as sleet and freezing rain in many locations, although the majority of the precipitation fell as rain and most roads remained wet. The second system, on the 20th, dumped up to two inches of rain and spawned springlike thunderstorms across parts of the Washington/Baltimore area. The only significant snowfall of the winter season–to–date at most locations (the latest first inch of snow in Washington since 1976) fell on the 28th. The swath of significant snowfall was quite narrow with up to 6 inches reported in northern Virginia and only an inch or less north of Washington. BWI recorded only 0.3” of snow for the month, the least in any January since 1973. In addition, the 3.9” observed at DCA was the largest total there since the March 1993 “Storm of the Century”.

JANUARY 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	Snow
National (DCA)	46.2	32.9	39.6	34.6	+5.0	70/14	15/5	3.22	2.72	+0.50	3.9
Baltimore (BWI)	46.3	31.7	39.0	31.8	+7.2	71/13	14/5*	2.87	3.05	-0.18	0.3
Dulles (IAD)	44.7	29.6	37.2	30.6	+6.6	72/14	11/5	4.18	2.70	+1.48	4.3
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	45.5	31.5	38.5	32	+7	71/13#	14/5	3.44	2.8	+0.6	3.9
Andrew AFB (ADW)	45.5	32.2	38.9	34	+5	70/14	14/5	5.77	3.1	-2.6	2.6

Other occurrences: * January 6; # January 14

LOOKING AHEAD TO FEBRUARY: Another February & Winter with Subnormal Snowfall?

Despite the first significant snowfall of the Winter in most locations during late January, snowfall for the season remains well below normal. The Winter of 1986–87 was the last season with above normal snowfall, and February 1987 was the most recent February with snowier than normal conditions. Below is a summary of the February and winter snowfall totals recorded at DCA during the last 10 years:

February Snowfall (Normal: 6.3”)

Year	Total (In.)
1995	?
1994	3.1
1993	4.1
1992	2.6
1991	0.3
1990	T
1989	1.2
1988	T
1987	10.3
1986	12.9

Winter (Dec–Feb) Snowfall (Normal: 15.6”)

Year	Total (In.)
1994–95	?
1993–94	9.2
1992–93	5.1
1991–92	6.6
1990–91	8.1
1989–90	9.2
1988–89	5.3
1987–88	13.1
1986–87	31.1
1985–86	15.4