

**OCTOBER 1996:** Since November 1995, unusually cool and wet conditions have prevailed across most of the Washington/Baltimore area. During this 12-month period, there have been 10 months with subnormal temperatures and 8 months with above normal precipitation at DCA. October provided both a taste of Autumn's chill as well as a bit of "Indian Summer" warmth, but yielded slightly below normal monthly temperatures at both DCA and BWI. An unusually cool period early in the month (3rd–12th) featured the first frost and/or freeze for many of the suburban locations, especially west and north of the cities. IAD was the only local airport to report a subfreezing low (31°F on the 12th), although readings in the thirties occurred often at 3 of the remaining 4 airports. Lows at DCA (the urban heat-island) never fell below 40°F in October. Daily temperature departures during this 10-day period ranged from –2°F to –14°F, and highs only reached the upper fifties on the 4th. A brief warm spell around mid month and again during the latter third produced readings in the low eighties on the 17th and 30th at many locations. Both DCA and IAD reported daily record highs on the 30th when the mercury soared to 82°F (tied w/ 1946) and 81°F, respectively.

Above normal precipitation was observed at 4 of the 5 local airports as two intense storm systems provided most of the monthly total. The first occurred on the 8th when the remnants of Tropical Storm Josephine moved through the region, dumping more than an inch of rain across the Washington/Baltimore area. About ten days later, a Nor'easter slowly moved up the Atlantic Coast, generating up to two inches of rain and wind gusts up to 50 mph across portions of the area. Monthly totals of about 4 inches were reported at the five airports and were significant enough to push the January–October totals over 40 inches at many locations (see table below). In fact, the year-to-date total (Jan–Oct) at IAD (49.13") was the second most for any such 10-month period while the 47.78" at BWI is the fourth wettest such period on record. Also, the January–October totals at the three major airports have already surpassed the normal **annual** precipitation, with 10-month departures between 9 and 16 inches.

**OCTOBER 1996 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:**

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmiT	DepNm	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNm	YrtoDate
National (DCA)	68.2	50.5	59.4	59.7	–0.3	82/30	41/5*	4.04	3.02	+1.02	41.93
Baltimore (BWI)	66.6	44.6	55.6	56.6	–1.0	80/17	34/12	4.32	2.98	+1.34	47.78
Dulles (IAD)	67.0	44.3	55.6	55.1	+0.5	81/30	31/12	3.96	3.20	+0.76	49.13
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	70.2	46.8	58.5	N/A	N/A	84/30	36/12	5.20	3.4	+1.8	55.26
Andrew AFB (ADW)	66.4	46.3	56.4	N/A	N/A	79/16#	36/12	2.37	3.3	–1.2	39.38

Other occurrences: \* November 12th; # November 17th.

**LOOKING AHEAD TO NOVEMBER: New Snowfall Observations.**

As soon as hardware procurement will allow, the National Weather Service (NWS) will implement near real-time collection and dissemination of cooperative observer (COOP) snowfall and snow depth observations with a data collection system using memory touch-tone telephones for transmission of weather observations to collection computers at the NWS Forecast Offices. The multi-year expansion of the snowfall/snow depth network will include thousands of existing official cooperative observers and will enhance observational data sources available to the media, local governments, and the private sector. For most of winter 1996–97, DCA will continue to be the official site for snowfall. The NWS Forecast Office at Sterling, VA (located 20 miles to the west-northwest of the District of Columbia) will also provide snowfall observations. In addition, multiple COOP stations across the Washington/Baltimore area will provide snowfall observations that are representative of the typically large variations that occur across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. NWS plans call for dissemination of the cooperative observations via National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Wire Service, the Family of Services, and the Internet.