

JULY 1998: For the second consecutive July, near normal temperatures and abnormally dry conditions prevailed across the Washington/Baltimore area. In fact, it was the first month of 1998 with subnormal precipitation at DCA and the third driest July on record at IAD (8th at BWI). All three major airports reported less than 2 inches of precipitation as measurable rain (≥ 0.01 ") fell on only 4 days at BWI, 5 at IAD and 7 at DCA. In addition, BWI observed 21 consecutive days (9th-29th) without measurable precipitation. The final 23 days of the month produced less than an inch of precipitation at BWI, IAD and DCA, with 0.53", 0.70", & 0.94", respectively. Most of the month's precipitation fell on the 8th as heavy morning showers and late day rains dropped close to an inch of rain on many locations. On the 16th, a powerful, fast-moving thunderstorm battered portions of the local area, generating strong wind gusts and frequent cloud-to-ground lightning. The strong wind gusts downed trees and power lines in some areas, resulting in numerous power outages. Another thunderstorm storm on the 30th, again affected parts of the local area, producing brief heavy rains, strong wind gusts, frequent lightning and additional power outages.

Unlike last year, July 1998 produced only a few hot and humid days in the Washington area. In fact, DCA observed only 9 days with 90°F+ highs, the fewest (tied w/ 1996 & 1989) since 1984. There were 21 days with at or below normal temperatures at DCA, including the first 15 days of the month. In fact, temperatures during the first half of the month averaged more than 3°F below normal at DCA. During the last half of the month, conditions more typical of July prevailed as readings soared above 90°F on 9 of the last 16 days at DCA. The hottest conditions occurred during what is climatologically the warmest period (the third week of July) of the year in the Washington/Baltimore area. Highs exceeded 90°F on four consecutive days at DCA (20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd) and even topped 95°F on the latter three days. During this period, the heat combined with high humidity, producing apparent temperatures between 105°F and 110°F across parts of the local area. On the 22nd, the mercury soared to 104°F at DAA while IAD observed a daily record high of 98°F. The frequent passage of cold fronts limited the duration of the hot weather and produced numerous clear, cool mornings as lows dipped into the fifties in many suburban areas.

JULY 1998 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station Location	Temperatures (°F)					Extreme/Day		Precipitation (In)			
	AvMx	AvMn	AvgT	NmlT	DepNml	MaxT	MinT	Total	Norm	DepNml	Yr to date
National (DCA)	87.9	69.9	78.9	80.0	-1.1	97/22	62/12	1.79	3.80	-2.01	30.27
Baltimore (BWI)	88.2	65.0	76.6	77.0	-0.4	99/22	55/11*	1.42	3.69	-2.27	28.75
Dulles (IAD)	86.9	63.7	75.3	75.6	-0.3	98/22	52/12	1.32	3.49	-2.17	31.48
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	92.5	68.2	80.4	N/A	N/A	104/22	57/12	1.79	3.8	-2.0	36.52
Andrews AFB (ADW)	87.3	68.7	78.0	N/A	N/A	99/22	63/2 [#]	2.53	4.3	-1.8	32.76

Other Occurrences: * July 12th; # July 9th, 12th & 13th.

LOOKING AHEAD TO AUGUST: *A Cool July = A Cool August?*

With the first two summer months behind us, our attention now turns towards August. Both June and July were slightly cooler than normal at DCA with monthly departures of -2.5°F and -1.1°F, respectively. Now the question arises, whether August will also feature cooler than normal conditions? An interesting and coincidental pattern has occurred at DCA since the 1980's, whereby every July with cooler than normal conditions has been followed by an August with subnormal temperatures. Below is a list of each July with subnormal average temperatures along with the following August average temperatures and departures from normal. [August normal average temperature at DCA: 78.5°F]

Year	July		August	
	Avg. Temp. (°F)	Dep. Nml (°F)	Avg. Temp. (°F)	Dep. Nml (°F)
1984	76.5	-3.5	77.8	-0.7
1985	79.0	-1.0	76.7	-1.8
1989	78.3	-1.7	77.1	-1.4
1990	79.4	-0.6	76.5	-2.0
1992	79.5	-0.5	74.0	-4.5
1996	77.6	-2.4	76.5	-2.0