

NOVEMBER 1991: This month will be remembered for the highly variable temperatures that were observed due in part to large perturbations in the jet stream. The first half of November featured several Arctic frontal passages which kept maximum temperatures well below normal, and minimum readings in the mid-teens in the suburbs (16°F at IAD on the 6th) and the high twenties in town. In addition, the first flurries of the season were reported throughout the area on several days during the first half of the month. A dramatic shift in the jet stream by the third week, which parked a strong ridge off the Atlantic Coast, sent highs soaring into the seventies on November 20, 21, 29, and 30, more than making up for the abnormally low temperatures earlier in the month.

Precipitation was confined to two events. A cool northeasterly flow generated light rain and drizzle over the Veteran's Day weekend (ending the excessively long stretch without measurable precipitation). This rain event brought an end to the suspension of recreational activities in the Shenandoah Valley necessitated by the drought conditions and continued wild fires after only one day. The majority of November precipitation fell from the 21st into the 22nd in association with a slow moving frontal system. Unseasonably humid air (60°F dew points) that encompassed the region at the time contributed to the heavy showers which dumped up to two inches of rain on the western suburbs. Additional rain fell during the final hours of the month, but the bulk of the storm's precipitation was measured during December 1 – 3.

NOVEMBER 1991 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)	57.3	40.3	48.8	48.7	+0.1	75/20	26/27	0.85	2.82	-1.97
Baltimore (BWI)	55.9	35.7	45.8	46.3	-0.5	74/20	18/27	2.54	4.62	-2.12
Dulles (IAD)	56.5	34.4	45.5	44.8	+0.7	74/20*	14/27	2.70	2.99	-0.19
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	59.2	38.4	48.8	47	+2	76/21	21/27	0.91	4.4	-3.5
Andrews AFB (ADW)	56.4	37.3	46.8	48	-1	75/21	17/27	1.03	3.3	-2.3

Other dates of occurrence: # November 21st

AUTUMN (SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER) 1991: Autumn '91 was warmer and substantially drier than normal across the Washington/Baltimore area. The driest September-November period since 1981 included one stretch of 23 days without measurable precipitation (October 18 – November 9). Fortunately, at least one soaking rain event affected the region during each month, preventing the Palmer Drought Index from registering extreme drought conditions area-wide. Temperatures averaged near normal during September and November (ending the record-tying string of eleven consecutive warmer than normal months in Washington); however, considerably higher than normal temperatures during October kept the season above normal and provided the region with the potential for exceeding 1990's record warmth.

AUTUMN 1991 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)	69.1	50.9	60.1	59.7	+0.4	96/9-16*	26/11-27	6.38	8.94	-2.56
Baltimore (BWI)	68.3	46.7	57.5	57.4	+0.1	98/9-16	18/11-27	7.94	9.68	-1.74
Dulles (IAD)	68.9	44.1	56.6	55.8	+0.8	97/9-16*	14/11-27	7.32	9.26	-1.94
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	70.0	46.5	58.2	58	+0	96/9-17	21/11-27	5.89	10.0	-4.4
Andrews AFB (ADW)	68.0	46.3	57.1	58	-1	95/9-17	17/11-27	5.36	10.2	-4.5

Other dates of occurrence: * September 17th

LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER: Another Record-Breaking Warm Year?

The record-setting warm year of 1990 may soon become a "secondary" memory across the Washington-Baltimore area. Through November, 1991 average temperatures were the highest on record at BWI and Washington, and a close second at IAD. Preliminary data indicate that if December temperatures average 39.7°F at DCA, 41.3°F at BWI, and 42.4°F at IAD, 1991 will dethrone 1990 as the warmest year ever (Dec. normals = 38.9°F, 36.5°F, and 35.1°F, respectively).

Through November, 1991 has been exceptionally dry, with IAD, BWI, and Washington all measuring the 3rd driest Jan. – Nov. on record. However, Jan. – Nov. precipitation at Washington has already exceeded the record dry year of 1930, and heavy rains during Dec. 1 – 3 have already eliminated the possibility of 1991 becoming the driest year at BWI and IAD. Barring any more significant December precipitation, 1991 should still be a near-record dry year.