

Weather of 2000

Cool Year with below normal precipitation despite late summer flash floods

2000 was a cool year, and another dry one, with a dry beginning and ending but some wet weather at times, especially during late summer when some nasty flash floods struck the area. A number of records or near-records were set this year.

January was cold and dry, but began quite mild. Three consecutive days from the 2nd-4th reached the 60s. On the 10th, a thunderstorm dropped pea-sized hail. After a very mild first half, a prolonged Arctic outbreak made for a rather chilly, blustery second half. 13 of the last 15 days remained below freezing, with lows in the teens or lower all but one day from the 14th on. All of the month's 12.7" of snow fell from the 19th on, the heaviest of 5.8" on the 20th and another 5.5" on the 30th. A low of -2 occurred on the 22nd.

Winter abruptly eluded the area in February, which was notably milder with little snowfall. Two ice storms hit the area. The first passed through on the 13th-14th. That didn't cause any major problems, but a major winter storm brought heavy snow, sleet, freezing rain, then heavy rains and thunderstorms on the 18th that caused some minor flooding in the area. 2.06" fell on the 18th, a February daily precipitation record. 2.15" total fell on the 18th-19th, with 2 inches of snow and ice. February was the first month with above normal precipitation since September 1999. Meanwhile, the final week was very mild, with a high of 72 recorded on the 25th and 6 of the final 7 days reaching 60 or above.

March was also very mild, tying for 5th warmest March on record. Precipitation was below normal, owing to an absence of snowfall east of the mountains. The high on the 8th reached a record 80, the second earliest 80-degree day ever on record. Two significant weather systems affected the area, with 1.16" of rain on the 11th and another 1.10" of 20th-21st. Wet snow mixed in, but didn't accumulate here. However, elevations above 2,000 feet picked up 6 inches plus, with over a foot at highest locations.

April was cool and wet. Showers were frequent, with light snow showers (0.2") on the 5th. Some sleet and snow flurries were also observed on the 9th. Lows on the 13th reached a chilly 24. Strong thunderstorms hammered the area on the 21st with heavy downpours and strong winds. A total of 1.87" of rain fell on the 21st-22nd. April turned out to be the second wettest month of 2000, with 4.12 inches.

May was warm, but had a chilly start. The low on the 1st reached freezing (32 F). However, summer made an early appearance from the 6th-13th, with every day in the 80s, except for the 9th, which had a hot high of 92. Little rain fell the first half of May, but several showers and thunderstorms during the second half nearly erased the month's precipitation deficit. High temperatures were cooler during the second half than the first half, an unusual trend for May.

June was warm and dry, despite many big thunderstorms in the area. 1.52" of rain fell on the 5th-6th, with a high of only 58 on the 6th. However, temperatures rebounded to 93 on the 11th. On the 16th, training severe thunderstorms dumped up to 4 inches of rain over the eastern half of the county, causing flash flooding and wind damage. Zero rain fell at this station, despite four consecutive hours with thunder.

July 2000 was a stark contrast from July 1999. The mean temperature of 69.0 F made it the *coolest* July on record – just one year after the *hottest* ever. The mean high temperature was only 79.1 F, and for only the second time ever in July, temperatures failed to reach 90. Precipitation was near normal, with frequent showers and storms. The heaviest storms hit at the end of the month. On the 31st, slow-moving storms caused flash flooding in Westernport and Cumberland. Only .32" rain fell at this station.

Within a week of the July 31st flash floods, widespread flash floods hit the western portion of the county again, due to training thunderstorms moving southeast along a warm front on the 6th. 2.70" of rain fell in a 7-hour period from 8am-3pm. 3.19" was reported in Frostburg, where major flooding was reported. Westernport was hit hard again as well. The remainder of August was cool and dry. Like July, there were no 90-degree days. The only other year with no 90-degree days in July or August was 1958.

After a warm, dry start, perhaps the worst flash flood in recent history hit the Cumberland area on the evening of September 11th. An intense thunderstorm stalled over LaVale and the north and west sides of Cumberland, dumping 5-plus inches of rain within only two hours. The storm was unreal. Every time it seemed like the rain was beginning to let up, it would begin coming down in buckets again. At this station, 3.17" of rain fell in only 90 minutes and 3.66" total. 4.80" was recorded at the Police Barracks in LaVale. Several feet of water filled the streets of Cumberland and LaVale, turning them into makeshift rivers and

turning cars into boats. I-68 was closed for over 3 hours after a wall of water flooded the freeway, and over \$2 million in flood damage was reported to homes and businesses. Westernport was also hit hard yet again – for the third time in only six weeks. More heavy rains, 2.22”, fell on the 25th-26th. September precipitation totaled 6.80”, the 3rd wettest September on record. A whopping 8.14” was recorded at the Cumberland Police Barrack station in LaVale.

The cool, wet weather came to an abrupt end in October, which only had 4 days of precipitation and a meager .78” of rainfall. A few stations in the southern part of the state had zero rainfall all month! October was warm, with high temperatures averaging nearly 70 degrees. The season’s first frost and freeze didn’t occur until the 29th.

November began mild, with the long dry streak finally coming to an end late on the evening of the 9th, when a line of thunderstorms brought heavy downpours, totaling 1.08”, and some locally damaging wind gusts. Snow flurries fell as early as the 14th, but no measurable snow fell. Winter-like temperatures slowly crept in, reaching 16 on the 23rd and 24th. Temperatures and precipitation were below normal.

December was consistently cold, with a fury of wild weather during the middle of the month. Early on the 12th, a cold front brought near hurricane-force winds to the area, bringing down many trees and causing scattered power outages. A 70-foot tall cell phone tower atop Dan’s Rock was even blown over. Then on the 13th-14th a heavy ice storm brought 1.3” of sleet and freezing rain and .99” of precipitation. A surprise thunderstorm hit the area on the evening of the 16th, and another winter storm brought 2.5” of snow on the 19th. 20 days had lows in the teens or lower, and all but one day in the final two weeks of the month remained below freezing. 2000 had the 4th coldest December on record (25.2 F).

2000 Weather Statistics

2000 Monthly and Annual Climate Summary LaVale, MD, Allegany County Observer Nate Mullins Station Observation Time: Midnight Lat: 39.657780°, Long: - 78.821871°, Elevation 1016'										
Temperature, ° F								Number of days		
Month	Mean Max	Mean Min	Mean Temp	Max Temp	Date	Min Temp	Date	Max ≥ 90	Max ≤ 32	Min ≤ 32
Jan	37.0	18.7	27.8	64	2	-2	22	0	14	26
Feb	47.1	26.2	36.7	72	25	10	9*	0	1	24
Mar	56.9	32.5	44.7	80	8	14	18	0	0	17
Apr	60.6	38.8	49.7	76	20	24	13	0	0	5
May	75.3	49.5	62.4	92	9	32	1	1	0	1
Jun	81.2	60.4	70.8	93	11	48	7	2	0	0
Jul	79.1	59.0	69.0	88	9	47	8	0	0	0
Aug	79.3	59.1	69.2	89	8	46	26	0	0	0
Sep	73.6	52.3	63.0	85	10*	40	30	0	0	0
Oct	67.7	44.2	56.0	84	4	29	29	0	0	2
Nov	48.9	31.4	40.1	66	2	16	24*	0	1	18
Dec	32.5	17.8	25.2	50	12	6	23	0	15	30
Year	61.6	40.8	51.2	93	6/11	-2	1/22	3	31	123

Precipitation, Inches				Number of days				Snow/ice, Inches		
Month	Total Precip	Max Day	Date	> 0.01" >	> 0.10" >	> 0.50" >	> 1.00" >	Total Snow	Max Day	Date
Jan	1.63	0.44	10	8	5	0	0	12.7	5.8	20
Feb	3.44	2.06	18	9	4	2	1	4.5	2.0	18
Mar	2.85	1.16	11	11	4	2	2	T	T	21*
Apr	4.12	1.37	21	12	10	3	1	0.2	0.2	5
May	3.78	0.75	19	14	10	4	0	-	-	
Jun	2.57	0.95	5	12	5	2	0	-	-	
Jul	3.56	0.98	24	12	7	2	0	-	-	
Aug	3.64	2.70	6	11	5	1	1	-	-	
Sep	6.80	3.66	11	11	6	2	2	-	-	
Oct	0.78	0.54	18	4	3	1	0	-	-	
Nov	2.08	0.94	9	7	5	2	0	T	T	25*
Dec	1.69	0.65	14	7	4	1	0	4.0	2.5	19
Year	36.94	3.66	9/11	118	68	22	7	21.4	5.8	1/20
Note: * = also occurred on earlier dates that month										
Number of days with										
Month	Fog	Sleet	Glaze	Thunder	Hail	Dmg wind				
Jan	1	0	0	1	1	0				
Feb	1	1	1	1	0	0				
Mar	1	0	0	1	0	0				
Apr	6	0	1	1	0	0				
May	6	0	0	6	0	0				
Jun	6	0	0	5	0	0				
Jul	6	0	0	7	0	0				
Aug	6	0	0	5	0	0				
Sep	13	0	0	5	0	0				
Oct	8	0	0	0	0	0				
Nov	5	1	1	1	0	0				
Dec	1	2	2	1	0	1				
Year	60	4	5	34	1	1				