

Weather of 2006

Record Warm Year with Below Normal Precipitation and a Lack of Snowfall

2006 will be remembered for its relentless warmth that led to a record warm annual temperature of 54.5 F, beating out several other recent warm years such as 1990, 1991 and 1998. Many temperature records were set. Precipitation was below normal, and 2006 set a new record for least calendar year snowfall with 9.3”.

January was exceptionally mild, with above normal precipitation but very little snow. Frequent frontal passages brought several moderate rain events and strong wind gusts. Temperatures felt more like March, with a mean of 39.0 F, the 3rd warmest January on record and the warmest since 1950. The low for the month was 22, the highest monthly extreme minimum for any winter month on record. Only about half of the lows (16 of 31) even reached freezing or lower – very unusual for a winter month.

Temperatures varied quite a bit in February. The month’s high temperature of 67 on the 16th was immediately followed by the month’s low of 7 on the 19th, after a sharp Arctic cold front passed through on the 17th, bringing widespread damaging winds in excess of 50 mph. February was dry, with most of the precipitation during the first half. 4.2” of snow fell on the 11th-12th, the heaviest event of 2006.

March was relatively mild, windy and very dry, setting a new monthly low precipitation for March with only 0.84” of rainfall. Temperatures reached a balmy 82 on the 13th. Virtually no snow fell.

April was also quite mild, with 20 of 30 days reaching 70 or higher. Despite this, light snow (0.3”) fell on the 5th and a late-month freeze was recorded on the 27th. Meanwhile, much-needed rainfall returned to the area, particularly on the 21st-23rd, when 2.68” of rain fell from a slow-moving front.

May had a warm start followed by an extended period of below average temperatures during the middle of the month. Frost was observed on the 7th and again as late as the 23rd. Most of the month’s precipitation, which was well below normal, fell on the 11th and especially on the 14th-15th, when 1.60” fell. A major heat wave invaded the area over the Memorial Day weekend, with four consecutive days in the 90s, all records. Highs reached 94 on the 29th and 30th, with stifling humidity.

On the 1st of June, a round of intense thunderstorms caused flooding, wind damage and lightning fires in the area. At this station, pea-sized hail and 1.48” of rain were recorded. Temperatures were relatively cool from the 3rd-14th, with most days in the 70s, and a chilly 42 recorded on the 7th. However, the second half of June was seasonably warm, with temperatures reaching the 90s on the 17th, 18th and 22nd. On the latter date, an intense thunderstorm dumped .85” of rain in 10 minutes, along with pea-sized hail. A stalled front brought several rounds of rain from the 23rd-27th. Moderate amounts of rain fell in our area, but areas east of Allegany County were deluged with tremendous rains that caused the severe flooding across much of the state. Many observers reported that this flooding rivaled that of Agnes in 1972.

July was hot and dry. Thunderstorms frequently bypassed the area. On the 18th, a severe storm battered the eastern part of the county, causing major wind damage and dropping golf ball sized hail. All but one day in July reached 80 or higher, with a high of 95 on the 30th.

August was one for the record books. The first two days of the month reached 98, the highest readings since July 31, 1999 when 100 was recorded. The 1st was a record; the 2nd was 1 degree shy of the 1991 record of 99. August’s mean maximum temperature was 87.5 F, 2nd warmest on record, and an overall mean of 75.0 made August 5th warmest ever. Meanwhile, virtually no rain fell all month until thunderstorms overnight on the 26th-27th dropped .79” of rain. Only 1.02” of rain made this the second driest August on record.

September brought an abrupt end to the extreme heat and dryness. The first three days of the month were only in the 60s, with 2.20” of welcome rain falling on the 1st-2nd from Tropical Storm Ernesto moving up the east coast. The rest of September was cool with frequent light rains. Precipitation was near normal, with below normal temperatures for a change.

October was also cool and cloudy with ample precipitation. The month began warm, with a high of 83 on the 4th, but a cold front passed through, with highs in the 60s on the 6th-7th and more rain. The heaviest rain of the month was 1.60” on the 17th. A five-day stretch from the 23rd-27th had four days with highs only in the 40s, and a dusting of snow was observed on the 24th. A potent storm system dropped about another inch of cold rain on the 27th-28th.

The coldest temperatures of November occurred early in the month. A chilly low of 21 was recorded on the 4th. However, most of the rest of the month was quite mild, with 72 recorded on the 11th. The month's heaviest rain of 2.06" fell on the 15th-16th, when a potent cold front passed through. After this front, it was warm and dry. Five consecutive days from the 24th-28th reached the 60s. Despite the chilly start, November ended up 4th warmest on record with a mean temperature of 47.3 F.

December was nothing short of spectacular. A powerful cold front passed through on the 1st. A record high of 72 was set, before the front passed through with a line of showers and fierce winds gusting up to 60 mph in the area, causing widespread damage. This system brought tornadoes to our northwest in PA. The month's only measurable snow fell on the 7th, a half-inch from a lake-effect snow squall. Temperatures quickly rebounded, with 8 of 9 days from the 10th-18th in the 60s – very unusual for December. All but 3 days had highs of 40 or higher, and the month's mean max of 50.2 F set a new record. December 2006 finished 2nd warmest on record with a mean of 40.7 F. The warmest December was 1984 (41.2 F). Precipitation, meanwhile, was rather sparse until 1.15" fell on the 22nd, and another .71" fell on Christmas Day, along with a surprise evening thunderstorm – certainly a rare event for the holiday.

2006 Weather Statistics

2006 Monthly and Annual Climate Summary LaVale, MD, Allegany County Observers Dave Drewery & Charlie Orlick (data compiled by Nate Mullins) Station Observation Time: Midnight Lat: 39.657780°, Long: - 78.821871°, Elevation 1016'										
Month	Temperature, ° F							Number of days		
	Mean Max	Mean Min	Mean Temp	Max Temp	Date	Min Temp	Date	Max ≥ 90	Max ≤ 32	Min ≤ 32
Jan	46.5	31.5	39.0	65	9	22	26	0	0	16
Feb	42.8	25.8	34.3	67	16	7	19	0	3	24
Mar	53.0	31.9	42.5	82	13	25	22*	0	0	19
Apr	68.8	41.8	55.3	82	20	32	27*	0	0	2
May	71.6	47.4	59.5	94	30*	34	7	4	0	0
Jun	79.9	58.5	69.2	93	18	42	7	3	0	0
Jul	86.4	64.0	75.2	95	30	53	7	8	0	0
Aug	87.5	62.6	75.0	98	2*	50	13	10	0	0
Sep	70.9	54.6	62.8	82	18*	45	27*	0	0	0
Oct	61.9	43.5	52.7	83	4	31	15	0	0	1
Nov	55.2	39.3	47.3	72	11	21	4	0	0	7
Dec	50.2	31.3	40.7	72	1	20	8+	0	0	20
Year	64.6	44.4	54.5	98	8/2*	7	2/19	25	3	89

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	3.88	0.78	2	18	10	2	0	1.3	1.0	25
Feb	1.49	0.68	4	10	3	1	0	7.0	3.5	11
Mar	0.84	0.42	12	9	2	0	0	0.2	0.1	25*
Apr	4.03	2.05	22	15	9	1	1	0.3	0.3	5
May	2.63	1.35	15	14	3	2	1	0.0	-	-
Jun	5.03	1.48	1	14	10	4	1	0.0	-	-
Jul	2.29	0.75	5	20	4	2	0	0.0	-	-
Aug	1.02	0.54	27	7	3	1	0	0.0	-	-
Sep	3.36	1.20	2	14	8	2	2	0.0	-	-
Oct	3.75	1.60	17	17	7	1	1	T	T	24
Nov	3.51	1.56	16	11	6	2	1	0.0	-	-
Dec	2.56	1.15	22	12	4	2	1	0.5	0.5	7
Year	34.39	2.05	4/22	161	69	20	8	9.3	3.5	2/11
Note: * = also occurred on earlier dates that month										
Month	Number of days with									
	Fog	Sleet	Glaze	Thunder	Hail	Dmg wind				
Jan	5	1	1	1	0	1				
Feb	0	3	0	0	0	1				
Mar	2	0	0	1	0	1				
Apr	1	0	0	4	0	0				
May	2	0	0	2	0	0				
Jun	4	0	0	6	2	0				
Jul	3	0	0	11	0	0				
Aug	0	0	0	3	0	0				
Sep	15	0	0	1	0	0				
Oct	8	0	0	1	0	0				
Nov	1	0	0	0	0	0				
Dec	5	0	0	1	0	1				
Year	46	4	1	31	2	4				