



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



December 1996

Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons		Estimated Damage		Character of Storm
					Killed	Injured	Property	Crops	

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

NONE REPORTED.

MARYLAND, Central

MDZ002	Allegany								
	05	2100EST			0	0			Heavy Snow
		2300EST							
MDZ003>005-009>010	Washington - Frederick - Carroll - Montgomery - Howard								
	05	2100EST			0	0			Winter Weather
	06	0100EST							

A vigorous upper-level disturbance combined with available moisture and marginally cold air to produce a swath of wet snow from the Maryland piedmont to the Potomac Highlands. Only Allegany Co (MDZ002) received widespread accumulations of 4 inches or more; the remaining affected counties received average accumulations between 1 and 3 inches.

Accumulations were highly dependent on elevation, especially in the foothills. In Frederick Co (MDZ004), lower terrain received 2 or 3 inches. However, along the western mountains, up to 9 inches may have fallen in Wolfsville. The same was likely true in neighboring Washington (MDZ003) Co. A similar effect occurred farther east, where 2 inches fell in western and northern Montgomery and Howard Cos (MDZ009>010), but plain rain fell in the southern and eastern portions. In general, the dividing line of accumulating snow was at 750 feet above sea level.

Frederick County									
Countywide	13	1000EST	1530EST						
				0	0	10K			Flash Flood
Carroll County									
N Portion	13	1000EST	1700EST						
				0	0	25K			Flash Flood
Baltimore County									
N Portion	13	1105EST	1600EST						
				0	0	10K			Flash Flood
Howard County									
W Portion	13	1115EST	1400EST						
				0	0	10K			Flash Flood
Montgomery County									
Countywide	13	1130EST	1400EST						
				0	0	3K			Flash Flood
Anne Arundel County									
N Portion	13	1400EST	1800EST						
				0	0	10K			Flash Flood

A north-south band of moderate to heavy rain dumped between 2 and 3 inches onto fairly saturated soil across northern and central Maryland, producing several areas of flooding and flash flooding. Hardest hit locations included Carroll, Baltimore, and Howard Cos.

In Carroll Co, at least 16 roads were closed from the combination of overflowing creeks, streams, and high standing water. Flooding was noted along the Big Pipe Creek watershed, especially in the towns of Detour and Union Bridge near the Frederick Co line. The west bank of the Patapsco river flooded. In Union Bridge, much of the town and its environs were under a foot of water. State route 75 was closed for much of the afternoon. In Westminster, a fire truck was blocked from its destination (a burning chimney) by flooded roads.

Numerous other roads were closed in Baltimore, Howard, Frederick, and Anne Arundel Cos. In Frederick Co, 20 roads were closed. Sealed state highways included routes 355 and 26 near Frederick city. Roads were reopened across the southern portion of the county by late afternoon, while those across the northern half remained closed until evening. In Anne Arundel Co, six thoroughfares were closed prior to and during the evening commute, including the intersection of state routes 32 and 198 near Laurel, route 450 at St. Stephens Church Road near Annapolis, and route 648 at Dorsey Road. Several motorists were stranded in the high water; no injuries were reported.

In Montgomery Co, flooding occurred in several typical locations. Beach Drive (along Rock Creek) was closed for a time in Kensington, and Seneca Creek flooded state route 28 southeast of Poolesville. Minor flooding was also reported at the Anne Arundel/Prince Georges Co line along Brock Bridge Road.



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MARYLAND, Central

The rain added to near-record totals for 1996. By the end of the month, Baltimore/Washington International Airport (Anne Arundel Co) received 58.33 inches, third-highest since records have been kept. Most locations in Maryland picked up between 50 and 60 inches of melted precipitation by year's end.

MDZ004>007-009>011 **Frederick - Carroll - Northern Baltimore - Harford - Montgomery - Howard - Southern Baltimore**
19 **1700EST** **0** **0** **Winter Weather**
06 **2000EST**

A band of light snow, which accompanied the first arctic front of the season, laid down a thin coating of slush which flash-froze into dangerous ice. Numerous accidents occurred during the evening commute, including several which bottled up major arteries and interstates. The Capital Beltway was closed near Kensington (MDZ009) when several automobiles careened into concrete barriers and other vehicles. Federal highway 29 was closed north of Burtonsville (MDZ009/010) due to a 15-car pile-up; several accidents were also reported in the Baltimore metropolitan region. No deaths or serious injuries were reported.

VIRGINIA, North

VAZ031-036>037-042-050-052 **Clarke - Nelson - Albemarle - Loudoun - Orange - Prince William**
05 **1800EST** **0** **0** **Winter Weather**
06 **0000EST**

A vigorous upper-level disturbance combined with available moisture and marginally cold air to produce a swath of wet snow across the Virginia piedmont. Counties with mean elevation below 750 feet received between 1 and 3 inches, though isolated higher spots noted substantially greater totals. Such was the case in Loudoun Co (VAZ042) and Prince William (VAZ052) Cos, where mean snow totals were 2 inches, but local high spots received between 4 and 6 inches.

VAZ021-025>030-038>041-051 **Highland - Augusta - Rockingham - Shenandoah - Frederick - Page - Warren - Greene - Madison - Rappahannock - Fauquier - Culpeper**
05 **1900EST** **0** **0** **15K** **Heavy Snow**
06 **0100EST**

A vigorous upper-level disturbance combined with available moisture and marginally cold air to produce a swath of heavy, wet snow across much of western Virginia from the Blue Ridge through the highlands, including most of the Shenandoah Valley. Accumulations were highly dependent on elevation. In general, western counties with mean elevations above 750 feet received 4 or 5 inches. However, many locations above 2500 feet received 6 or more inches of snow.

The snow, which accumulated in a 3 to 4 hour period, covered many area highways, resulting in numerous accidents. Two particularly hard-hit counties were Augusta and Rockingham. The road problems were exacerbated by the fact that this was the first major snow of the season; few, if any, abrasives had been previously applied. The event, which arrived at the tail end of the evening commute, snarled traffic and induced dozens of accidents. A woman was killed when her vehicle flipped on icy roads in Craigsville (VAZ025). Numerous accidents involved multiple vehicles. Damage from the storm was minimal; only a few power outages were reported by Virginia Power and the Rappahannock Electric Cooperative.

VAZ025-027-029 **Augusta - Shenandoah - Page**
19 **1600EST** **0** **0** **Heavy Snow**
06 **1700EST**

A strong upper-level jet streak induced lift of residual low-level moisture into polar air, producing two separate batches of light snow which totaled an average of 4 inches or more in portions of the central Shenandoah Valley. Elevations above 2500 feet received between 4 and 8 inches of snow; elevations below 1000 feet received less than 4 inches. Schools closed on the 20th in Shenandoah and Augusta Cos (VAZ025-027), giving children an extended winter break. Most of the snow accumulated on grassy surfaces and trees.

VAZ026-028-030>031-037>042-050>054 **Rockingham - Frederick - Warren - Clarke - Albemarle - Greene - Madison - Rappahannock - Fauquier - Loudoun - Orange - Culpeper - Prince William - Fairfax - Arlington**
19 **1800EST** **0** **0** **Winter Weather**
06 **2000EST**

A band of light snow, which accompanied the first arctic front of the season, laid down a thin coating of slush which flash-froze into dangerous ice. Numerous accidents occurred during the evening commute, including several which bottled up major arteries and interstates. In Albemarle Co (VAZ037), 22 accidents were reported; a jackknifed tractor trailer along Interstate 66 in Warren Co (VAZ030) tied up traffic for two hours. No deaths or serious injuries were reported.



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WEST VIRGINIA, East

WVZ048-053		Grant - Jefferson							
		05 1800EST			0	0			Winter Weather
		06 0100EST							

WVZ049>052-054>055		Mineral - Hampshire - Morgan - Berkeley - Pendleton - Hardy							
		05 2000EST			0	0			Heavy Snow
		06 0100EST							

A vigorous upper-level disturbance combined with available moisture and marginally cold temperatures to produce a swath of heavy wet snow across much of eastern West Virginia. In general, accumulations were 4 or 5 inches, with only Grant Co (WVZ048) and Jefferson Co (WVZ053) receiving average accumulations of 3 inches. The highest totals were in Pendleton Co (WVZ054), where 6 inches fell in Franklin, Sugar Grove, and Upper Tract.

Totals exceeding 8 inches were likely at elevations above 2500 feet.

WVZ055		Hardy							
		19 1200EST			0	0			Heavy Snow
		1300EST							

A strong upper-level jet streak induced lift of low-level moisture, producing a small area of heavy snow across the lower Potomac Highlands. An average of 4 inches fell in Hardy Co; lesser amounts fell to the north and northeast.