



ATLANTIC COAST OBSERVER NETWORK, MD / DE / DC CHAPTER WITH DATA FROM NEARBY AREAS

EARLY MONTH HEAVY SNOW CHRISTMAS WINTER STORM

Below normal temperatures, which gripped the region this fall, continued into December. Temperatures the first two weeks of the month averaged well below normal while the balance of the month was more seasonable. Precipitation was above normal for the fourth consecutive month. The cold temperatures along with the above normal precipitation brought with it heavier than average snows. Snowfall totals of a foot or more occurred from Harford County westward while 6 to 12 inches fell elsewhere except for St Marys and Wicomico Counties where 4 inches fell.

The month began on a cold note. An arctic cold front moved through the region early on the third. Temperatures fell rapidly from around 40 to the teens and 20's. This cold air set the stage for a major early winter snowstorm which moved up from the southwest on the 5th. The snow began shortly after midnight in the south and west and ended by mid afternoon in the east and north. It changed to freezing rain and rain south and east of Washington DC. This snow had a high moisture content. Snowfall amounts of 8" or more were reported by ACON observers are: **Rob Rickell** of **Hanover 1 S PA 9.5"**, **Rebecca Harvey** of **Eagle Rock 9.0"**; **Bobby Miller** of **Millers 4 NE 8.4"**; **Marty Sharrow** of **Owings Mills** and **Greg Keefer** of **Hagerstown 1 E 8.2"**; **Greg Klein** of **Westminster 5 SSE**, **Lynn Albright** of **Fallston 2 NW**, **Jim Canavan** of **Wilmington 4 NNE** each 8.0". Ideal conditions for low temperatures—clear skies, no wind, and a good snow cover—permitted temperatures to fall to record levels on the morning of the 7th. Here are the coldest as reported by ACON observers: **Al Kreinik** of **Parkton 5 SSW** and **Greg Keefer** of **Hagerstown 1 E** each +1 degree; **Rob Rickell** of **Hanover 1 S PA** 2 degrees; **Lynn Albright** of **Fallston 2 NW** and **Kevin Shaw** of **Gaithersburg 2 WNW** each 3 degrees; **Ralph Hartsock** of

Westminster 4 SSE and **Stan Rossen** of **Glenmont 1 NNE** each 5 degrees.

The wettest storm of the month hit the region on the 11th. Precipitation amounts were generally in the 1.5 to 2 inch range. Freezing rain was observed west of the Chesapeake Bay with the greatest ice accumulations west and north of Baltimore. **Bobby Miller** of **Millers 4 NE** lost electric power for almost 20 hours. (More details concerning this storm in the Observer Notes section.)

Temperatures the last two and a half weeks were "fairly" seasonable. Two storm systems moved through the region. A storm system pulled the warmest air of the month into the region along with a good rain on the 20th. Maximum temperatures ranged from the mid 50's to mid 60's. Rainfall amounts ranged from a quarter of an inch in Montgomery County to around an inch in New Castle County Delaware.

The last major storm of the month arrived Christmas Eve as light snow except for St Marys County where it was mostly rain. Christmas Day saw the snows change to freezing rain and then to all rain except for Washington County where it remained all snow. The rains then changed back to wet snow. The heaviest snows fell north and west of Baltimore. 7.5" fell at **Owings Mills**, 7.1" fell at **Millers 4 NE**, 7.0" fell at **Manchester 1 SW**, 6.6" fell at **Parkton 5 SSW** and **Smithsburg 2 NE**, 6.5" fell at **Westminster 5 SSE**, and 6.0" fell at **Westminster 4 SSE**. Liquid amounts of over an inch fell east of Washington County except for southern Delaware and the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. **Greg Keefer** of **Hagerstown 1E** noted that this was only the second time that significant snows fell on both Christmas Eve and Christmas day. Records at Hagerstown go back to the 1890's. **Joe Terry** of **Forest Glen** recorded his lowest barometric pressure since March 1999. **Ralph Hartsock** said that this was the "best snow on Christmas since 1969". **Jim Vaughn** of **Smithsburg 2 NE** remarked that this was the first Christmas snowfall since 1993.

EXTREMES REPORTED BY

ACON OBSERVERS

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE

Ridge	66
UofD Georgetown	65
Hollywood	65

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE

Eagle Rock	0
Parkton 5 SSW	1
Hagerstown 1 E	1

WARMEST AVG. TEMP.

Ridge	37.8
Baltimore 2 SE	37.5

COLDEST AVG. TEMP.

Eagle Rock	25.8
Hanover 2 S PA	29.1

PRECIPITATION

UofD Georgetown	2.92
Ridge	3.66

MAXIMUM SNOW

Eagle Rock	23.9
Millers 4 NE	16.2
Hanover 2 S PA	15.7

MINIMUM SNOW

Hollywood	3.1
Oraville	4.1
Ridge	4.4

Member News

Al Kreinik of **Parkton 5 SW** continues his recovery from successful heart bypass surgery on December 17.

Data Update

ACON reports for 1992 to 1996 have been added to our web site.

2002 Annual Report

This report will be issued in a week or so. This is being done so the December report is not delayed. Please forward any missing 2002 data **ASAP**.

OBSERVER COMMENTS FOR DECEMBER 2002

Gary Gallaher of Bear 2 SW, DE

5th -- Second heaviest December snowfall on record.

7th -- 6 degrees this morning set the record for the coldest so early in the winter season.

25th -- Minimum barometric pressure of 29.12" which is a December record and the lowest since 3/13/93 when the station record low barometric pressure of 28.41" occurred. (Barometric pressure records since 2/1992)

Dave Bryant of St Margarets

December precipitation 84% above normal. Precipitation for the year 8% below normal, while 2001 was 4% below normal. Going back to the beginning of the drought (July 1998) precipitation 191.0", which is 5.50" which is 3% above normal.

Dan Hanson of Millersville 1 SE

5th -- Heaviest December snowfall since 1982.

Jug Bay Wetlands of Lothian

5th -- Snow started last night and ended around noon today. 6" accumulation.

31st-- Heavy fog.

Al Kreinik of Parkton 5 SW

11th -- Icy rain. Anemometer cups frozen from 9AM to 2:30 PM.

Marty Sharrow of Owings Mills

25th -- Freezing rain to rain and then to heavy snow.

Joe Manfre of Baltimore 2SE

20th -- Cloudy, not as cold, light rain in late PM.

31st -- Variable clouds, mild.

Ralph Hartsock of Westminster 4 SSE

1st -- Few flurries, windy, and cold.

3rd -- Very cold and windy, early flurry, 20's all day.

11th -- Ice storm - Heavy freezing rain - tree damage.

20th -- Heavy AM showers, clearing late AM.

28th -- Sunny, then late clouds, dusting of snow late.

Greg Klein of Westminster 5 SSE

11th -- Heavy freezing rain, 1/4" to 1/2" accumulated on every surface. Tree damage in area caused some power outages.

Bobby Miller of Millers 4 NE

11th -- Heavy ice storm, 1/2" ice accumulation. Tree damage. Power out for 19 hours 50 minutes.

19th -- Evening drizzle and fog.

20th -- Morning moderate to heavy rain showers.

24th - 25th -- Snow, changed to periods of sleet, then freezing rain, then heavy rain, and back to snow heavy at times with visibility as low as 1/8th mile.

Lynn Albright of Fallston 2 NW

18th -- Heavy frost

Rich Giannola of JHU/APL OF Laurel

16th -- Sundogs at 3:30 PM.

Rob Cohen of Potomac 4 N

Record low minimum temperatures on the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th (coldest so early in season), & 8th. Snowiest De-

ember since 1989.

11th -- Freezing rain 1/8" to 1/4" accumulation.

Stan Rossen of Glenmont 1 NNE

7th -- Earliest date the temperature fell below 10 degrees. Old record was 7 degrees on 12/12/88

Kevin Shaw of Gaithersburg 2 WNW

7th -- Earliest single digit reading ever recorded.

Joe Terry of Forest Glen

15 days with snow on the ground this month.

3rd -- Strong FROPA ~0315. Temperature fell from 40 degrees to mid 20's and dew point fell from 25 to 0 degrees by 0900.

4th -- Coldest this early in the season since station inception (1994) 14 degrees.

25th -- Lowest barometric pressure, 29.26", since March 1999

Bill Hudelson of South Bowie

11th -- Overcast, freezing rain in morning with brief period of sleet, light fog afternoon, rain ending 2130.

28th & 30th -- Heavy AM frost.

31st -- Dense early morning fog.

Brine Smith of Oxon Hill

11th -- -FZRA/FZRA 0200-1000; -RA 1000-1700. About 0.1" glaze.

Floyd Abell of Hollywood

5th -- Snow before dawn then sleet and freezing rain.

24th & 25th -- Rain mixed with snow and sleet.

John Zyla of Ridge

25th & 26th -- Large barometric pressure change: 24 hours 0.85"; 33 hours 1.00".

Greg Keefer of Hagerstown 1 E

7th -- Record minimum temperature of +1degrees. Old record was 9 set in 1910.

8th -- Tied record low of 13 set in 1937. Temperatures shot up to 44 by late morning.

11th -- Freezing rain fell all day and was moderate to heavy at times. Moderate to heavy ice accumulation on everything. 0.3" of ice was on the ground. Freezing drizzle this evening.

24th & 25th -- Accumulating snow on both days is rare. The only other time this occurred was in 1962.

Jim Vaughn of Smithsburg 2 NE

Record December snowfall. Old record was 12.6" in 1996. This was the 5th consecutive month with above normal precipitation. Twelve days with wind gusts of 40+ MPH.

11th -- Freezing rain left a coating of 0.4" on everything.

31st -- Record maximum temperature of 55 degrees.

Robert Rickell of Hanover 2 S PA

5th -- Fluffy, dry snow

7th -- York PA airport had an impressive -9 degrees!

11th -- Sleet and Freezing rain. Glaze 1/2" thick.

25th -- Snow, sleet, freezing rain