

December 2018

Springfield Park, Glen Allen, Virginia

December was the fourth coldest and fourth wettest on record. The monthly mean temperature was 41.6°F, a -0.9°F departure from the 10-year average. December had its highest maximum of 68.6°F on December 21st but had only 3 days of ≥65°F for the month. On 18 days, the minimum reached freezing or below which was fifth greatest in December in the past 10-years. The lowest temperature was only 20.1°F occurring on the 11th. The lowest dew point on December 12th was only 17.7°F which was the 2nd highest minimum on record; the record was 28.7°F in the warm December of 2015. The highest barometric pressure for December was 30.61 inches recorded on the 27th and the lowest was 29.18 inches on the 21st which was the lowest since March 12, 2014 when it was 29.13 inches. On December 9th Springfield Park had the greatest one-day snowfall on record of 11.9 inches; previous record was 11.4 on January 30th 2010. The 12 inch total snowfall for December is now the second most snow for the month; only 2009 had more with 12.9 inches. The snow started at 7:35AM and lasted until 2100 hours and was all snow with a liquid equivalent of 1.16 inches. The maximum snowfall rate was about 2 inches per hour from 3:05 PM to 3:30 PM. To see pictures of this storm, click on the link below. -----
----- <https://photos.app.goo.gl/rhkxa16bLTjK13J87>.

(Ref. Springfield Park Station) See hourly observations for this snowstorm

(Ref. Springfield Park Station) See video taken around 3 PM of the 9th during the snowstorm.

The precipitation total for the month was 4.51 inches which was a 0.33 inch departure based on a ten-year average. There were 12 days with measurable precipitation and tied for the cloudiest although 2015 was almost as cloudy. The total precipitation for the year was 67.49 inches which was a 21.95 inch surplus. The average relative humidity was 78.7 percent and only 2015 had a higher average relative humidity.

Richmond International Airport

The total precipitation for 2018 was 63.73 inches which was a 20.13 inch surplus for the year making this the second wettest year on record for Richmond. The 30-year average for Richmond is 43.60 inches. The wettest year was 1889 with 72.02 inches. The 3.45 inches of precipitation for December made it the 46th wettest December in the past 131 years with a 0.19 inch departure. Richmond had 13 days with precipitation; only 14 Decembers in the past 121 years have had more precipitation days.

The mean temperature for the Richmond International Airport was 42.4°F which was departure of 1.4°F. December was the 32nd warmest in the past 121 years. The lowest maximum temperature of 33°F for December occurred on the 9th during the snowstorm. The temperature range for the 9th was only 3°F with a high of 33°F and a low of 30°F; only 6 Decembers have had a lower daily temperature range.

Richmond set two daily records this month the December 9th the snow of 11.5 inches set a new record for the 9th; the previous record was only 1.8 inches in 1988.

On the 15th Richmond had a record high minimum temperature of 51°F; the previous record high minimum was 50°F in 1974.

The Richmond International Airport had 11.5 inches of snow on December 9, 2018 which was the second heaviest single-day December snowfall on the Richmond records. The record was December 22, 1908 when 15 inches occurred. The Dec 9th snowfall total also makes December the 6th snowiest December on record for Richmond since 1897. The 30-year average snowfall for December is 2.1 inches. This was also Richmond's 12th largest snowstorm since 1897. The Airport recorded 7 inches on the ground for December 10th which was the most recorded on the ground at one time since December 15, 1958 when 9 inches was recorded. The models did not predict the high snowfall totals but predicted the storm about a week in advance. -----

This was also Richmond's 12th largest snowstorm since 1897 and the 7th largest single day storm. (Ref. See the Chart of the 25 Greatest Snowstorms)

This chart includes both sleet and snow. From 1908 to 1929 the Weather Bureau recorded sleet and snow separately. The Wakefield Office of the NWS hasn't added in the sleet totals with the snow totals. The March 3-6, 1912 snowstorm doesn't make the top 25 storms as they were two separate events combined (3.6 inches on the 3rd & 4th) and (7 inches on the 6th) in the second storm.