

The Veterans Day snowstorm –Nov. 1987 The Richmond International Airport had Only 4.5 Inches of Snow in this Storm

On the weekend preceding the storm, November 7th through the eighth, the region experienced beautiful 70 degrees Fahrenheit weather. The snow began during the early morning of November 11th with a quick burst of snow that produced 1 to 2 inches across Washington. But snowfall quickly ended, leading many to believe the storm was over. For a few hours in the morning no snow fell and people headed off to work, school and shopping. A second low system quickly intensified. By noon, a very heavy, nearly stationary, band of snow had set up through the eastern half of the area. Localized within this band, snow fell at a whiteout rate of 3 to 4 inches per hour for several hours, accompanied by lightning and thunder.

This was the earliest snowstorm ever to hit the Washington area. The 11.5 inches of snow that fell National Airport easily broke an old November record of only 6.9 inches that fell on November 30, 1967. The next earliest date for a snowstorm of that magnitude occurred well into the month of December when 12 inches of snow fell on December 17, 1932. National Airport was in the heavy snow band that reached its maximum of 14 to 16 inches in western Prince George's County. Snowfall amounts were much less to the Northwest with Gaithersburg's reporting only 3 to 4 inches of snow. Both Boston and Providence received 10 inches of snow early also setting new season records. On November 12th, a high temperature 48 degrees F allowed for a quick return to normal road conditions for the area.