



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



March 1997

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

DCZ001	District Of Columbia								
	06	0600EST 1600EST			0	0	15K		Gusty Winds
The combination of deep low pressure over the Canadian Maritime region with arctic high pressure over the midwestern U.S. produced northwesterly wind gusts to 50 mph or greater on land and as high as 54 mph on the Chesapeake Bay. Scattered property damage and power outages were reported in the city.									
DCZ001	District Of Columbia								
	31	1600EST 2359EST			0	0	30K		Gusty Winds
A nor'easter, languishing off the middle Atlantic coast, produced sustained winds of 25 to 35 mph with gusts to 50 mph in the District of Columbia. Minor damage was reported to buildings, power lines, and trees. The gusty winds forced the closure of the Washington Monument for two days during the peak of the spring tourist season, and also blew away the famed Japanese cherry blossoms a full week before the festival and parade. An airliner on approach to Washington/National Airport was forced to divert to Washington/Dulles after twice aborting a landing.									
Along the Anacostia River, a 19th-century barge was uncovered as the northwest winds aided an anomalously low tide. On land, a portion of brick wall was destroyed at the Capital Children's Museum.									

MARYLAND, Central

MDZ002>007-009>011-013>014-016>018	Allegany - Washington - Frederick - Carroll - Northern Baltimore - Harford - Montgomery - Howard - Southern Baltimore - Prince Georges - Anne Arundel - Charles - St. Mary'S - Calvert								
	06	0300EST 1500EST			0	0	150K		Gusty Winds
The combination of deep low pressure over the Canadian Maritime region with arctic high pressure over the midwestern U.S. produced northwesterly wind gusts to 50 mph or greater on land and as high as 54 mph on the Chesapeake Bay. Scattered property damage and power outages were reported, especially across northern Maryland.									
In downtown Baltimore City (MDZ011), a condemned building (under renovation) along Martin Luther King Blvd. sustained a partial wall failure. The wall failure resulted when the roof caved in. The cave in occurred when gusty winds blew through open windows on the top floor. Nearby downtown roads were closed for several hours as clean-up crews tore down the damaged portion of the building. Several trees/large limbs and wires were downed as well. In Carroll Co (MDZ005), two-thirds of a tin roof was blown off an apartment building in Westminster, forcing residents out until repairs were made; a few trees/large limbs and wires were also down in the county.									
Other scattered damage included downed wires and large limbs in Howard Co (MDZ010), a roof blown off the kitchen of a home in Woodlawn (MDZ006), and a smashed chimney on a home in Annapolis (MDZ014).									
Baltimore Gas and Electric reported 16,000 customers were without power during the morning; Potomac Electric Power Co. reported 8000 customers were without power in Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties (MDZ009-013).									
Some damage was noted to boats at a marina in Annapolis.									

Washington County									
Hagerstown	29	1155EST			0	0			Hail (0.88)
Frederick County									
2 N Frederick	29	1215EST			0	0			Hail (1.50)
Baltimore County									
Hereford	29	1325EST			0	1			Lightning
Prince George'S County									
Lanham	29	1325EST			0	0	10K		Gusty Winds
Calvert County									
2 S Prince Frederick	29	1330EST			0	0	1K		Hail (1.75)
Harford County									
Forest Hill	29	1335EST 1336EST	0.5	50	0	0	10K		Tornado (F0)



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MARYLAND, Central

Baltimore County

Dundalk	29	1342EST 1343EST	0.5	25	0	0	20K		Tornado (F0)
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Charles County

2 S Dentsville	29	1355EST 1358EST			0	0	1K		Hail (1.75)
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St. Mary'S County

Patuxent River Nas	29	1355EST			0	0			Thunderstorm Wind (G50)
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A line of strong to severe thunderstorms, associated with a vigorous upper-level disturbance acting on relatively unstable air, produced several instances of large hail, wind gusts to 58 mph, and two gustnadoes. Soft hail fell across most of Maryland east of the Blue Ridge mountains, generally ranging in size from 1/4 to 1/2 inch. One cell produced nickel sized hail near Hagerstown (Washington Co). A television meteorologist staffer drove through soft hail estimated to be between ping-pong and golf ball size just north of Frederick. Later, a well-developed cell in southern Maryland dropped golf ball-sized hail at two locations. The hail fell for several minutes near Dentsville (Charles Co), covering the ground to a depth of 3 inches. Penny-sized hail fell in Dublin (Harford Co), coating the ground.

A non-severe wind gust snapped five power poles in Lanham (Prince Georges Co), causing brief power outages to several hundred Potomac Electric Power customers. No trees or other structures were reported damaged.

A gustnado lifted a woman and her pet pony 5 feet in the air, and tossed the woman 35 feet away from her original location, at a farm in Forest Hill (Harford Co). The woman had a few bruises but was uninjured. The brief twister uprooted at least 6 large cedar trees, a 320-foot section of range fence, and a rabbit hutch. Between one and two dozen mixed soft and hard wood trees were snapped on the resident's and her neighbor's property. Structural damage was estimated at \$1300.

Twin gustnadoes, occurring no more than 3 miles from each other, touched down in Dundalk (SE Baltimore Co). Several witnesses observed funnel clouds, and one provided videotaped evidence of a lowered rotating cloud base combined with twin debris circulations, at the turbulent leading edge of the storm. Damage occurred within the debris clouds at two fast food establishments. At one of the restaurants, a traffic signal and some utility poles were blown down. At the other restaurant, a large plate glass window was blown out, some utility poles and large limbs were snapped, and a dumpster was tossed. One person sustained a few cuts. Over 7500 customers were without power for a brief time during the storm.

Lightning struck and injured a 51-year old man in Hereford (Baltimore Co), who later recovered at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center.

Harford County

Dublin	29	1355EST 1357EST			0	0			Hail (0.75)
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MDZ002>007-009>011-013>014-016>018									Allegany - Washington - Frederick - Carroll - Northern Baltimore - Harford - Montgomery - Howard - Southern Baltimore - Prince Georges - Anne Arundel - Charles - St. Mary'S - Calvert
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31	1600EST 2359EST				0	0	100K		Gusty Winds
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A nor'easter, languishing off the middle Atlantic coast, produced sustained winds between 25 and 40 mph with gusts to 50 mph or higher over all of northern and central Maryland. The winds caused scattered damage to buildings under construction, minor roof damage, and tree and power line damage. In Montgomery Co (MDZ009), fallen tree limbs blocked roads in Bethesda. Several fires broke out in the county; one was aided by the strong winds. A roofer's blowtorch ignited an attic at a Darnestown home, which eventually caused over \$100 thousand in damage.

In Frederick Co (MDZ004), there were at least 10 instances of trees and wires down, but no major structural damage. A wind gust was clocked at 75 mph in Clear Spring (MDZ003), and some trees and lines were downed elsewhere in the county as well. The winds, which continued through April 1, caused the postponement of the Baltimore Orioles baseball club's home opener.

Scattered power outages were reported in the Baltimore Gas and Electric and Potomac Electric Power (PEPCO) service areas. PEPCO reported 3000 outages, most in Prince Georges County (MDZ013).

MDZ007

Harford	31	2200EST 2359EST			0	0			Heavy Snow
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The same nor'easter that produced gusty and sometimes damaging wind gusts also included a swath of wrap-around snow which moved through northeastern Maryland during the evening of the 31st and early morning of April 1st. Harford Co received between 4 and 8 inches of heavy wet snow, with up to 10 inches in some spots, most of it accumulating on grassy surfaces but with some roads reported hazardous across the northern section of the county.

Throughout the remainder of the Baltimore metropolitan region, accumulations ranged from 1 inch in the southwest suburbs to 5



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MARYLAND, Central

inches in the northeast suburbs, again mainly on grassy surfaces. Accumulations ranged from 1/2 to 1 inch in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC.

VIRGINIA, North

VAZ042-052>057

Loudoun - Prince William - Fairfax - Arlington - Stafford - Spotsylvania - King George

06	0400EST	0	0	35K	Gusty Winds
	1600EST				

The combination of deep low pressure over the Canadian Maritime region with arctic high pressure over the midwestern U.S. produced northwesterly winds gusts to 50 mph or greater on land and as high as 54 mph over water. In Virginia, scattered power outages were reported in a swath from the northern Shenandoah Valley through the Northern Neck region.

**VAZ021-025>031-
036>042-050>057**

Highland - Augusta - Rockingham - Shenandoah - Frederick - Page - Warren - Clarke - Nelson - Albemarle - Greene - Madison - Rappahannock - Fauquier - Loudoun - Orange - Culpeper - Prince William - Fairfax - Arlington - Stafford - Spotsylvania - King George

31	1600EST	0	1	500K	Gusty Winds
	2359EST				

A nor'easter, languishing off the middle Atlantic coast, produced sustained winds between 25 and 40 mph with gusts to 50 mph or higher over much of northern Virginia. The winds caused scattered damage to buildings under construction, roofs, and trees and power lines. In Fairfax Co (VAZ053), damage included a partial unroofing of the Pickwick shopping facility in Centreville. Several businesses were closed during the cleanup, with one of the businesses, a video store, condemned. In Vienna, two partially constructed town homes sustained damage. One of the homes was nearly destroyed, and the other had its top level collapse.

There were several damage reports from Arlington Co (VAZ054), and even one injury. An elderly woman (over 70 years of age) was blown down and sustained head lacerations, requiring a brief hospital stay. A town home under construction was damaged. A large oak tree, at least 15 feet in diameter, was uprooted, totalling a nearby automobile. Several trees in its path were damaged, and a portion of the tree fell onto a home. Another uprooted tree destroyed a deck along South Sixth Street. A roof facing was blown off an office building along Wilson Blvd, causing damage to several nearby automobiles. A woman was trapped in her car by a fallen utility pole in Alexandria.

Counties along the tidal Potomac River also sustained some damage. In Nokesville (VAZ052- Prince William Co), a woman was trapped in a market when its awning collapsed. At least 20 reports of down trees were logged in Prince William Co. A boat was reported missing on the tidal Potomac east of Stafford Co (VAZ055).

The Shenandoah Valley was not spared the damage, either. In Staunton (VAZ025), two 80-foot sycamore trees fell onto a roof due to channeling winds through a valley along Jennings Branch Creek. A 38-foot metal roof was blown off a nearly completed barn at the Ammonett Farm. In Elkton (VAZ026), a mobile home's roof was peeled off by the gusty winds. Several other homes across the region reported minor damage to shingles and siding. Nearly a dozen trees were blown down in Fauquier Co (VAZ041). At least 20 trees were reported down in Shenandoah Co (VAZ027), with nearly one-third of all utility customers in the county without power.

Much of the damage occurred during the late afternoon and evening, when wind gusts exceeded 45 mph across much of the region. Power outages across northern Virginia put over 20,000 customers in the dark on the 31st. Outages included 4900 customers in the Woodbridge/Occoquan area; nearly 10,000 customers in the Spotsylvania/Stafford/King George region, and roughly 2000 across portions of the Shenandoah Valley.

WEST VIRGINIA, East

WVZ050>053

Hampshire - Morgan - Berkeley - Jefferson

06	0300EST	0	0	30K	Gusty Winds
	1600EST				

The combination of deep low pressure over the Canadian Maritime region with arctic high pressure over the midwestern U.S. produced northwesterly wind gusts to 50 mph. In eastern Berkeley Co (WVZ052), a single-wide trailer was destroyed at around 3 AM. The home was uninhabited. Scattered tree and power outages were also reported in the panhandle.

**Berkeley County
Hedgesville**

29	1220EST	0	0	Hail (0.88)
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A line of strong to severe thunderstorms, associated with a vigorous upper-level disturbance acting on relatively unstable air, produced several instances of hail and wind gusts up to 50 mph in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia around noon. One cell dropped nickel-sized hail in Hedgesville; other cells dropped hail the size of peas and marbles. No damage was reported.



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WEST VIRGINIA, East

WVZ048>055 Grant - Mineral - Hampshire - Morgan - Berkeley - Jefferson - Pendleton - Hardy
31 **1600EST** 0 0 53K

31 **2359EST** Gusty Winds

A nor'easter, languishing off the middle Atlantic coast, produced sustained winds between 25 and 35 mph with gusts to 45 mph or higher over all of eastern West Virginia. The winds caused isolated damage and power outages.