

LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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Seasonal Decline Continues as the Ice Season Begins

Monthly mean water levels declined on each of the Great Lakes from October to November. Water levels fell by about average amounts on lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron, more than average on lakes St. Clair and Erie, and less than average on Lake Ontario. The Great Lakes are expected to continue their annual seasonal decline during December.

Although it is too early to say just how large the 2005-06 seasonal decline will be on each of the lakes, it is probably safe to say that people affected by, or interested in, water levels on

Lakes Michigan- Huron are watching its seasonal decline closely again this year. Water levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron have declined more than average so far this year and are now below Chart Datum. As indicate by the six-month water level forecast (available at:

http://chswwww.bur.dfo.ca/danp/bulletin_e.html) water levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron will likely remain below Chart Datum over most of the forecast period, and if low water supply conditions persist, water levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron could be about as low as they were during 2003.

Ice Season

With the cold weather upon us and surface water temperatures dropping, can ice be far behind? As a matter of fact, ice has already started forming in a few of places in the northern portion of the Great Lakes basin.

Environment Canada monitors ice conditions in five regions: the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the East Coast, and the Arctic. If you would like to track ice conditions please visit the Canadian Ice Service at:

<http://ice-glaces.ec.gc.ca/> .

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Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	November 2005 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning of December 2005 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2004)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2004)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	14 cm below	11 cm below	12 cm below	8 cm below
Michigan-Huron	48 cm below	17 cm below	46 cm below	16 cm below
St. Clair	27 cm below	17 cm below	22 cm below	16 cm below
Erie	10 cm below	13 cm below	9 cm below	12 cm below
Ontario	4 cm above	8 cm above	7 cm above	12 cm above

At the Canadian Ice Service Web site you will find a daily ice hazard bulletin and ice charts showing ice concentrations and stages of development. Be sure to click on the "Ice Codes" button at the top of the page to learn more about the Egg Code and the colour codes used on the ice charts.

The Egg Code

In the early 1980s, the Canadian Ice Service upgraded the way it reports on ice conditions. In co-operation with other countries, Canada developed a reporting standard for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This standard is known as the "Egg Code", named for its oval shape. This oval device is an efficient means of delivering vital information on ice conditions to mariners and other users.

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November Precipitation over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term November average:

Great Lakes Basin	150%	Lake Erie	149%
Lake Superior	135%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	161%	Lake Ontario	136%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary

The Egg Code may look complicated, but once you become familiar with its organization you will be able to gain a great deal of useful information about ice conditions in a short period of time.

Environment Canada's Green Lane -- Your Source for the Latest on the Environment

Take some time to explore the Green Lane™, Environment Canada's Internet resource for weather and environmental information. You can find the Ontario Green Lane site at:

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/> .

While you are there be sure to check out the pages dedicated to youth and the environment. Just click on the "Kids" button on the left-hand side of the page to go directly to Environment Canada's Youth Portal for Ontario Region. This page will connect you to some of Environment Canada's best on-line resources for youths and educators.

Seasons Greetings

Everyone involved in the preparation and distribution of LEVELnews would like to wish you a happy holiday season and a safe and prosperous new year.

November Outflows from the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term November average:

Lake Superior	97%	Lake Erie	98%
Lake Huron	88%	Lake Ontario	106%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary