

# LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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## *Spring is in the Air*

With spring in the air, cottage owners and recreational boaters are starting to ask what water levels will be like this summer on the Great Lakes. It's a good question, but one that can't be answered with any confidence right now.

We can, however, look to the latest Monthly Water Levels Bulletin prepared by the Canadian Hydrographic Service for an idea of what we might expect to see this summer. The March 2006 edition of the Bulletin, posted at: [chswww.bur.dfo.ca/danp/bulletin\\_e.html](http://chswww.bur.dfo.ca/danp/bulletin_e.html), contains the six-month water levels forecast for April through September 2006.

Since it isn't possible to accurately forecast water supply conditions in advance, a probable range of future levels is provided in the Bulletin for each of the Great Lakes. Extremely high or low water supply conditions can cause levels to fall outside the probable ranges shown. However, there is a good chance that water levels will end up somewhere within these ranges.

Right now, it looks like water levels will be below average on each of the lakes this summer, except for Lake Ontario. Water levels on Lake Ontario are expected to be close to average in July and August.

There is a chance that water levels could approach average on lakes Superior and St. Clair, and be above average on lakes Erie and Ontario. However, low water level conditions will almost certainly persist on Lakes Michigan-Huron. If levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron experience a near-average seasonal rise this spring, summer levels will be a bit higher than they were last year. High supplies would help move levels closer to average, but low supplies would mean summertime levels only a few centimetres above Chart Datum, which **(continued on next page)**

### Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	March 2006 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning of April 2006 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2005)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2005)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	13 cm below	10 cm below	13 cm below	10 cm below
Michigan-Huron	40 cm below	17 cm below	40 cm below	15 cm below
St. Clair	6 cm below	15 cm below	16 cm below	19 cm below
Erie	5 cm above	18 cm below	1 cm below	17 cm below
Ontario	15 cm above	2 cm below	5 cm above	2 cm below



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is the reference level on each lake used to define water level depth on navigation charts.

### Ever Wondered Why?

Periodically, LEVELnews reminds its readers to check the Canadian Hydrographic Service's Monthly Water Levels Bulletin for the latest six-month water level forecast. Have you ever wondered why the current edition of the bulletin has the previous month's date on it? The reason the bulletin is dated one month earlier than the month it is produced and distributed in is the result of a naming convention frequently used for products that contain water level or similar types of data. The March 2006 date on the current bulletin (that is, the one produced and distributed

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## March Precipitation over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term March average:

Great Lakes Basin	91%	Lake Erie	97%
Lake Superior	107%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	110%	Lake Ontario	67%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary

during April) signifies that it includes recorded water level data up to and including March 2006.

### One Source for all Your Weather Needs

Whether you need to:

- learn about severe weather warnings
- plan an outdoor event
- monitor approaching storms
- head out onto the water
- search past weather events

Environment Canada's weather Web site at: [www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca) has all the information you need.

When you visit Environment Canada's weather Web site you will find links to several informative Web pages including the following:

- Weather Warnings
- Five-day Weather
- Marine Weather

- RADAR Imagery
- Satellite Imagery
- Lightning
- Weather Maps
- Past Weather (Climate Data)

While visiting the weather Web site, be sure to check the answers provided for frequently asked questions.

## March Outflows from the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term March average:

Lake Superior	97%	Lake Erie	103%
Lake Huron	90%	Lake Ontario	114%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary