

# LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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## Daily Water Levels Show Seasonal Declines on Each of the Lakes except Ontario

Daily water levels fell on each of the Great Lakes during January except for Lake Ontario. Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron and Erie continued their annual seasonal declines, while Lake Ontario appears to have begun its annual seasonal rise.

Daily water levels fell 10 cm on Lake Superior during January, which is 3 cm more than its long-term average decline for the month. Daily levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron fell by 6 cm in January, 4 cm more than its long-term average decline for January. Lake Erie's level

declined by 5 cm in January; on average it declines by 2 cm during the month.

Daily water levels on Lake Ontario increased 7 cm during January, 2 cm more than its average increase for the month. The level of Lake Ontario actually remained about the same during the first three weeks of January, and then increased 7 cm during the last week of the month. The lake rose in response to the precipitation that fell on the lake on January 24 and 25, the subsequent runoff from its basin due to the rain and snow melt, and reductions in the lake's outflow needed for ice management purposes.

During January, the outflows from Lake Ontario varied on occasion from those specified by the lake's regulation plan, Plan 1958-D, to assist in ice management in the Beauharnois Canal located at the outlet of Lake St. Francis. As a result of these and previous deviations in flow from those specified by Plan 1958-D, the level of Lake Ontario is now about 2 cm higher than would have occurred if Plan 1958-D flows had been released. The water retained on Lake Ontario due to the flow reductions **(continued on next page)**

### Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	January 2010 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning-of-February 2010 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2008)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2008)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	12 cm below	7 cm above	12 cm below	7 cm above
Michigan-Huron	16 cm below	14 cm above	18 cm below	13 cm above
St. Clair	10 cm below	20 cm below	same	11 cm below
Erie	same	5 cm below	1 cm above	1 cm below
Ontario	5 cm below	25 cm below	2 cm below	21 cm below



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will be released later this winter as the opportunity arises.

As indicated in the Great Lakes Water Level Information table provided below, the levels of lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron remain several centimetres below their respective averages for this time of year, while the levels of lakes St. Clair, Erie and Ontario are close to their respective averages. The levels of lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron are higher than they were a year ago, while the levels of the other lakes are lower than their levels of a year ago.

### Water Level Forecast

With average water supply conditions, the levels of lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron are expected to fall gradually in February, as is typical at

this time of year. The level of Lake St. Clair is expected to rise, while that of Lake Erie is near its annual low and is not expected to fall or rise appreciably in February. Lake Ontario's level is expected to rise a few centimetres in February if average water supply and river ice conditions occur.

For a complete range of probable water levels over the next six months on each of the Great Lakes and on Lake St. Clair, please refer to the January 2010 edition of the Monthly Water Level Bulletin found at:

[http://www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/tidal\\_e.html](http://www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/tidal_e.html).

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### January Precipitation over the Great Lakes \*

Great Lakes Basin	52%	Lake Erie	60%
Lake Superior	49%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	46%	Lake Ontario	69%

### January Outflows from the Great Lakes \*

Lake Superior	104%	Lake Erie	105%
Lake Huron	101%	Lake Ontario	99%

\* As a percentage of the long-term January average.

NOTE: These figures are preliminary