



LEVELnews

Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Water Levels

Superior Wet, Rest of Lakes Dry

Lake Superior saw a very wet June, while all the other lakes saw dry conditions continue, resulting in Superior water levels rising much more than average while Michigan–Huron's rise was below average and Erie and Ontario's levels declined.

- The monthly mean water level of Lake Superior was 17 cm above its period-of-record (1918–2015) average in June and 2 cm lower than June 2015.

- Lake Michigan–Huron's mean level in June was 30 cm above average and 16 cm higher than last year's June level.

- Lake Erie's mean monthly level was 28 cm above average and 8 cm higher than June 2015.

- Lake Ontario was 3 cm below its June average and the same level as last year.

- The dry conditions from the Great Lakes once again extended into the St. Lawrence

River basin where the levels near Montreal fell even further below average in June.

The wet conditions in Lake Superior caused the lake to rise 13 cm over the month of June, considerably more than its average (1918–2015) rise of 8 cm. Lake Michigan–Huron only rose 1 cm in June, compared to its average rise of 6 cm. Lake Erie's level fell 7 cm in June when on average it rises 2 cm. Lake Ontario fell 5 cm in June, when on average it declines only 1 cm.

Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	June 2016 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning-of-July 2016 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918–2015)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918–2015)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	17 cm above	2 cm below	18 cm above	1 cm below
Michigan–Huron	30 cm above	16 cm above	28 cm above	12 cm above
St. Clair	34 cm above	7 cm above	34 cm above	9 cm below
Erie	28 cm above	8 cm above	24 cm above	14 cm below
Ontario	3 cm below	same	5 cm below	21 cm below

Beginning-of-July Lake Levels

Lake Superior's beginning-of-July level was 18 cm above average (1918–2015) and 1 cm below last year's. Lake Michigan–Huron's beginning-of-July level was 28 cm above average, 12 cm higher than last year and the highest it has been since 1998. Lake Erie was 24 cm above average at the beginning of July but 14 cm lower than the same time last year. Lake Ontario's level at the start of July was 5 cm below average and 21 cm below this time last year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Chart Datum on the Great Lakes

At times you may hear the Great Lakes levels referenced to chart datum. A chart datum is a horizontal plane used to refer current lake levels to in order to provide more information on the depth of water for safe boat navigation on the lakes. The chart datum used on navigation charts for the Great Lakes is a low-water level set from recorded lake levels for each lake so that lake levels are expected to be above the chart datum 95% of the time. At the beginning of July all of the Great Lakes levels were at least 46 cm above chart datum level. Nautical charts reference the bottom of the lake to the chart datum, so for instance, if a location on the nautical chart indicates that the bottom of the lake is 1 m below chart datum, then using July 1 water levels, you can tell that the depth of water will be at least 1.46 m at that location. For more information on chart datum you can refer to the

[Fisheries and Oceans Canada web page on vertical datums](#) at: www.tides.gc.ca/eng/info/verticaldatums and the chart datum for each of the Great Lakes is given in [Canadian Hydrographic Service's monthly water levels bulletin](#) at: tides-marees.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin-eng.html.

Summer Level Outlook

Relative to their beginning-of-month levels, and assuming average water supply conditions, Lake Superior is expected to continue its seasonal rise during July, Michigan–Huron is expected to stay at about the same level as it reaches its seasonal peak for the year, and Lakes Erie and Ontario are expected to decline through July. For a graphical representation of recent and forecasted water levels on the Great Lakes, refer to the [Canadian Hydrographic Service's monthly water levels bulletin](#) at: tides-marees.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin-eng.html.

June Precipitation over the Great Lakes*

Great Lakes Basin	83%	Lake Erie	70%
Lake Superior	129%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lake Michigan–Huron	65%	Lake Ontario	60%

June Outflows from the Great Lakes*

Lake Superior	119%	Lake Erie	109%
Lake Michigan–Huron	109%	Lake Ontario	103%

*As a percentage of the long-term June average.

NOTE: These figures are preliminary.