



LEVELnews

Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Water Levels Near Average Lake Level Changes in March

Conditions for March were generally dryer in the Great Lakes watershed than the previous two wet months, resulting in lake level changes close to average for March. All the lakes remain well above average levels for this time of year.

- The monthly mean water level of Lake Superior was 16 cm above its period-of-record (1918–2016) average in March, but 7 cm lower than March 2016.
- Lake Michigan–Huron's mean level in March was 23 cm

above average and 8 cm lower than last March's level.

- Lake Erie's mean monthly level was 41 cm above average and 7 cm above its level the previous March.
- Lake Ontario was 32 cm above its March average and 3 cm higher than the level last year.
- Montreal Harbour levels were above average to start March but fell below average by the midpoint of the month and ended the month below average.

Precipitation in the Great Lakes basin was average for the month of March resulting in near average level changes for the lakes through the month. Lake Superior was the driest of all the lakes, after a very wet February, with its level declining 5 cm through the month of March when on average (1918–2016) it declines 1 cm. Lake Michigan–Huron's level rose 4 cm which was almost equal to its average 5 cm rise through March. Lake Erie was the wettest of the Great Lakes for the month, due in part to above average precipitation in its

Great Lakes Water Level Information

| Lake | March 2017 Monthly Mean Level | | Beginning-of-April 2017 Level | |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| | Compared to Monthly Average (1918–2016) | Compared to One Year Ago | Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918–2016) | Compared to One Year Ago |
| Superior | 16 cm above | 7 cm below | 14 cm above | 11 cm below |
| Michigan–Huron | 23 cm above | 8 cm below | 24 cm above | 14 cm below |
| St. Clair | 39 cm above | 3 cm below | 47 cm above | 2 cm below |
| Erie | 41 cm above | 7 cm above | 44 cm above | 6 cm above |
| Ontario | 32 cm above | 3 cm above | 32 cm above | 4 cm above |

basin as well as above average inflow from Lake Michigan–Huron, resulting in a 16 cm rise when the average is 13 cm over the month. Lake Ontario had a rise of 15 cm, slightly greater than its average 14 cm rise for March, but much closer to average than seen in February.

Beginning-of-April Lake Levels

All the lakes had above average beginning-of-April levels. Lake Superior's beginning-of-April level was 14 cm above average (1918–2016), and 11 cm lower than the level at the same time last year. Lake

Michigan–Huron's beginning-of-April level was 24 cm above average and 14 cm lower than last year. Lake Erie was 44 cm above average at the beginning of April and 6 cm above this time last year. Lake Ontario's level at the start of April was 32 cm above average and 4 cm above this time last year. At the beginning of April, all of the lakes were at least 17 cm above their chart datum level.

Period of Record Updated

Each year the data set used to calculate the monthly average water levels for each of the lakes is updated to include the data collected during the previous year. The lake level data for 2016 has now been verified and the period-of-record statistics used for comparison purposes has been updated to include data from 1918 to 2016.

Lake Level Outlook

Relative to their beginning-of-month levels and assuming average water

supply conditions, all the Great Lakes are predicted to be in their seasonal rise through the month of April. 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](http://CanadianHydrographicService.gc.ca/tides-marees.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin-eng.html) at: tides-marees.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin-eng.html.

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March Precipitation over the Great Lakes*

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------|
| Great Lakes Basin | 103% | Lake Erie | 114% |
| Lake Superior | 91% (including Lake St. Clair) | | |
| Lake Michigan–Huron | 102% | Lake Ontario | 109% |

March Outflows from the Great Lakes*

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|--------------|------|
| Lake Superior | 129% | Lake Erie | 117% |
| Lake Michigan–Huron | 114% | Lake Ontario | 109% |

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

NOTE: These figures are preliminary.