

LEVEL 1 Low Water Condition Factsheet

Level 1 Low Water Condition Declared

What does that mean?

A Low Water condition is declared when precipitation amounts and/or streamflow rates fall below pre-determined thresholds.

These thresholds are set by the provincial government in its Low Water Response Program. Low Water condition levels range from Level I to Level III, representing progressively more severe water supply shortages and restrictions on water use.

HCA and the Hamilton Low Water Response Team are responsible for evaluating watershed conditions and declaring Low Water conditions for the HCA watershed.

Current Declaration

A Level 1 Low Water Condition has been declared for the entire HCA watershed. This includes Spencer Creek, Chedoke Creek, Redhill Creek, Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek, Stoney Creek Numbered Watercourses, as well as all of their tributaries and other minor watercourses.

Level 1 is declared when three-month precipitation totals are below 80% of long-term averages, and/or when 30-day average streamflows are below 70% of the minimum average summer month flow. Level 1 results in a request for a voluntary 10 per cent reduction in water consumption by all surface and groundwater users.

Current Conditions

Three-month precipitation totals for mid April to mid July were 52 to 78 percent of long-term averages, at eight rain gauge stations throughout the watershed. Five of the eight gauges had 3-month precipitation totals less than 70 percent of long-term averages.

30-day average streamflows have fallen below 70 percent of the minimum average summer month flow, at four of the five flow stations throughout the watershed.

Details of the Ontario Low Water Response Program are available at: www.ontario.ca/page/low-water-response-program

What can you do to help?

At this time, the Hamilton Low Water Response Team is encouraging water users of surface and groundwater sources within the watershed to reduce their water use by 10 percent, and share this request with other water users.

Reducing the use of surface and groundwater sources at this critical time will avoid more serious shortages in the watershed, and lessen the impact of reduced water availability on our environment. Water users reliant on the municipal water system are asked to follow any active municipal water use bylaws.

It's important we all do our part to reduce water use in our watershed.

At Home

- Follow local lawn watering restrictions in your area
- Water your gardens in the morning or evening rather than the heat of the day (where permitted)
- Use a broom to clean paved surfaces instead of water
- Install toilet dams
- Use rain barrels water you need around the yard
- Repair leaky faucets
- Reduce non-essential water use (car washing, lawn watering)

Municipal Users

- Actively encourage compliance with outdoor water use by-laws.
- Reduce water withdrawals for park and public lands irrigation by scheduling withdrawals, use of storage.

Golf Course Users

- Make use of water storage on the course
- Withdraw water more slowly over a longer period of time (i.e. reduce pumping rate)
- Schedule surface water withdrawals with neighbouring golf courses.

Agricultural Users

- Mobilize a local agricultural water users group
- Withdraw water more slowly over a longer period of time (i.e. reduce pumping rate)
- Schedule surface water withdrawals with neighbouring water takers

Aggregate Users

- Reduce non-essential water use (e.g. landscape watering) and use efficient equipment for washing and dust suppression
- Aggregate operations with washing plants increase surveillance of wash operations to identify and correct any water losses (e.g. leaky pipes)
- Recycle washing water and augment from dewatering effluent
- Closely monitor operating levels and permit conditions (e.g. pond levels) where applicable
- Withdraw surface water slowly over a longer period of time (i.e. reduce pumping rate)

Want more information on Low Water Conditions?
Call 905-525-2181, ext. 138



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone