



NEWS RELEASE

Lower Trent Conservation ■ 714 Murray Street, Trenton, Ontario K8V 5P4
Tel: (613) 394-4829 ■ Fax: (613) 394-5226 ■ Website: www.ltc.on.ca ■ Email: information@ltc.on.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Low Water LEVEL 1 Condition

With precipitation well below normal over the past two months, Level 1 Low Water (minor drought) conditions are now being experienced across the Lower Trent Conservation watershed region, an area stretching from Grafton to Quinte West, and from Lake Ontario to Rice Lake. As part of the declaration of a Level 1 Low Water Condition, local municipalities, residents and businesses are expected to voluntarily reduce their water usage by 10 percent.

The April/May monthly rainfall totals recorded by Environment Canada at Trenton were 36 and 24 millimetres, which is 46 percent and 34 percent of normal precipitation respectively.

While March rainfall amounts were slightly above average, the lower rainfall amounts for April and May bring the 3-month precipitation average for the Trenton climate station to 72 percent of normal. A 3-month average precipitation below 80 percent of normal is the trigger for Level 1 Low Water.

“We will need to receive 125 millimetres of rain during the month of June, which would be 150 percent of normal, to lift the Level 1 Lower Water status,” says Janet Noyes, Manager – Watershed Science & Services. “The lack of rainfall is also resulting in water flows on local streams to be 40 to 60 percent below normal for this time of year.”

Droughts can cause many severe impacts on the environment and communities including:

- Water shortages for human consumption, industrial, business and agriculture use
- Decline of water quality
- Increase in wildfires
- Increases in insect infestations and plant disease

Following lower than average precipitation and low water levels in 1998, the Ontario government developed the *Ontario Low Water Response* program to ensure the province was prepared for future low water conditions. The response plan was developed to help coordinate and support local response in the event of a drought. There are three levels of Low Water Conditions with Level 1 being the least severe and Level 3 being the most.

Conservation Authority staff will continue to monitor conditions and report new information as it becomes available. To learn more about Ontario’s Low Water Response program visit our website at www.ltc.on.ca.

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For more information, contact:
Marilyn Bucholtz | Communications & Outreach Coordinator
(613) 394-3915 ext. 216 (Lower Trent Conservation)