

Hamilton Conservation Authority's Watershed is in a Level I Low Water Condition

What does that mean?

A low water condition is declared when precipitation amount and streamflow levels fall below a pre-determined threshold.

These values are set out by the provincial government in its Low Water Response Plan. Low water condition levels range from Level I to Level III. The higher the level, the more severe the water supply shortage and

the restrictions on water use.

Level 1, the watershed's current condition, is declared when precipitation amounts fall below 80 percent of a three-month average, and / or when streamflows drop below 70 percent of the minimum summer month flow.

Based on these criteria, the conditions established were Level 1 for the entire

Hamilton area watershed. This includes the Spencer Creek, Red Hill Creek, Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek as well as all of their tributaries and other minor watercourses.

While May received more than average precipitation, June and July have seen precipitation levels fall, with less than 50 % of normal precipitation

received in July. This trend has continued into the early part of August. Consequently, flow in area creeks has dropped. Flow stations near Westover, Highway 5 and Dundas on Spencer Creek are reporting flows below the 70 % threshold for Level 1. Consequently, HCA declared a Level 1 condition for the watershed on August 8.

The Ontario Low Water Response Plan is available at: http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/Publication/MNR_E002322P.html

What can you do to help?

At this time HCA is requesting surface and groundwater water users to reduce their water use by 10 percent, and to forward this message on to water users in their sectors. Reducing surface and groundwater use at this critical time may help avoid more serious shortages and lessen the impact of reduced water availability on our environment. Please do your part to reduce water use.

Around Your Home

- Observe local lawn watering restrictions applicable in your area
- Where permitted, water your gardens in the morning or evening, and not in the heat of the day
- Use a broom to clean paved surfaces rather than water

- Install toilet dams
- Use rain barrels for needed water 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.
- Where applicable, closely monitor operating levels and permit conditions (e.g. pond levels).
- Withdraw surface water slowly over a longer period of time (i.e. reduce pumping rate).

Please remember:

Water is precious, and we all share the water resources of our watershed.