



A News Release
from the
**Cataraqui Region
Conservation Authority**

September 29, 2016

CRCA Water Response Team Maintains Severe Drought Declaration

Kingston – The CRCA region, and much of eastern Ontario, has received close to average amounts of rainfall over the last two months, after a much less than average spring and summer. In August, the area received about the normal amount of rainfall, though in only 3 rain events, leaving the rest of the month very dry. In September so far, we have received less than the normal amount of rainfall, but on a much more regular basis.

The rainfall we have received has definitely helped the drought conditions considerably. The vegetation is back to green, lake levels have been holding reasonably steady, and some streams have responded to the rain, and have been rising. But many streams have shown minimal response to the rainfall, groundwater levels have stayed very low, and wells that went dry earlier in the summer are still dry now.

Based on the lack of watershed response to the rainfall so far, the Cataraqui Water Response Team has maintained the Severe drought declaration for the time being, as have the other Water Response Teams across the region. Until conditions show an improvement, the Water Response Team will maintain the Severe drought declaration.

As noted, inland lake levels are still above winter levels, and at this time are not expected to impact this year's winter ice levels, but may mean problems for removing boats and docks from lakes this fall.

There are still areas with dry wells across the region (concentrated in the western part of the CRCA), including some wells that have gone dry after the rainfalls in August. There is a concern for wells that remain dry into the cold weather, as they may not recover until the spring.

The Water Response Team continues to recommend water conservation across the CRCA, and eastern Ontario, given the continuing dry conditions, and the potential for dry conditions to continue through the fall months. The most recent long term forecast is for the warm dry weather to continue into winter, with the expectation for "normal" winter conditions.

Low water conditions are determined by the Cataraqui Region Water Response Team (WRT) convened by the CRCA. Membership includes water managers, major water users, public health, agriculture, school boards, marina operators, golf courses, government agencies, dam operators and others.

The Water Response Team recommends water conservation across the jurisdiction, for all water users, residential and commercial, especially those areas that are supplied by a ground water well or shore well. The team is asking residents and businesses of the region to be wary of water usage, and try to conserve water anywhere they can; this includes the outside watering of plants and lawns, and washing driveways, sidewalks, cars, etc. Permit to Take Water holders are also encouraged to reduce water takings during this exceptionally dry time. Those residents relying on wells and shore wells should be concerned that, as the drought continues, their water supply may run dry, and should plan for what to do when their primary source of water runs dry.



CATARAQUI REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
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The CRCA WRT declared a Minor drought condition on May 26th, upgraded that condition to Moderate on July 5th, and upgraded to a Severe drought condition on August 10th.

The CRCA has numerous water conservation web links on their website at <http://crca.ca/education/publications-resources/resources-for-wise-water-use/>.

The CRCA will continue to monitor conditions, and will provide updates as conditions change.

In order that we can track impacts of the drought conditions in the watershed, we request that any individuals or businesses in the Cataraqui Region who may be experiencing difficulties with their wells (groundwater and shore), or are seeing other signs of watershed stress due to the dry conditions, please contact the Conservation Authority by calling 613-546-4228 or 1-877-956-CRCA(2722), ext. 241, or fill in the survey on our website www.crc.ca/drought.

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For more information call:

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