

Watershed Conditions Statement - Water Safety

Parry Sound District

Friday, March 27, 2020
1:00pm

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry – Parry Sound District is advising area residents that a Watershed Conditions Statement - Water Safety is in effect in the District until Thursday, April 02, 2020

Residents within the Parry Sound-Muskoka area should keep a close watch on conditions, regularly check for updated messages and exercise caution around water bodies as flows and levels within rivers and streams are anticipated to rise in the coming days. Although flooding is not expected at this time, residents may wish to consider taking action to ensure their sump pumps are working properly and to secure or protect any property in flood-prone or vulnerable areas.

With cool temperatures, banks and shorelines adjacent to water bodies are extremely slippery and unstable. Residents and visitors should exercise caution while around water bodies and maintain close supervision of children and pets.

MNRF also advises caution when using forest access roads for outdoor activities as many are seasonally inundated with water, prone to washouts and may be impassible due to current water levels.

The ministry is closely monitoring the weather and developing watershed conditions. Further updates will be issued as appropriate.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Description of Weather System

Starting Saturday, a Colorado low will approach the Great Lakes region and persist into the weekend bringing widespread rainfall to Southern and Northeastern Ontario. Rainfall amounts of up to 20mm or more are expected on both Saturday and Sunday, with total (2 day) amounts reaching 40 to 45mm in some locations. Moderate to strong cyclonic winds will come with the system.

Sunday into Monday will see continued rainfall for the area in the amount of 5 to 15 mm. Both Saturday and Sunday will see daytime temperature highs between 5 to 10 °C and

night time temperatures above Zero °C for much of the province. Slightly cooler more seasonal weather is likely Monday and continuing next week.

Description of Current Conditions

Currently water levels on waterbodies with control structures are relatively low due to winter drawdown, prior to the spring melt. Flows are normal for this time of year but are anticipated to rise due to the rain, warm temperatures and snow melt. Current snow conditions in the Muskoka and Parry Sound region average 30cm of snow depth, containing an average of 119mm of snow water equivalent, which is approximately normal for this time of year.

It is expected that lower-lying portions of known flood-prone roads along river courses may be impacted to various degrees as river levels start to increase over the next week.

Great Lakes water level information from Environment Canada indicates Lake Huron/Georgian Bay water levels are well above normal. Currently, Lake Huron/Georgian Bay water levels are approximately 7cm above previous record high lake levels, 91cm above average (1918 – 2019) and 36cm higher than the seasonal water level at this time last year.

DEFINITIONS

- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – WATER SAFETY:** indicates that high flows, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for such users as boaters, anglers and swimmers but flooding is not expected.
- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK:** gives early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high winds or other conditions
- **FLOOD WATCH:** potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities
- **FLOOD WARNING:** flooding is imminent or occurring within specific watercourses and municipalities.

LEARN MORE

- Surface Water Monitoring Centre public webpage www.ontario.ca/flooding
- Environment Canada bulletins: www.weather.gc.ca
- A close watch on local conditions and weather forecasts from Environment Canada is recommended.