

Hydrologic Conditions – December 2015

The Hydrologic Conditions Mapper for New York State has been updated for the month of December 2015 and can be accessed at:

<http://ny.water.usgs.gov/projects/eom/>

The average precipitation across most of New York was between 2.8 and 4 inches, but ranged from 1.92 inches in Niagara County to 4.9 inches in Oneida and Suffolk Counties during the month. Precipitation totals were generally within 1 inch of normal quantities, but varied from 1.03 inches below normal in Niagara County to 1.04 inches above normal in Oneida County. According to the National Weather Service (<http://www.weather.gov/nerfc/watersupply>), many counties have an annual cumulative precipitation deficit from 5 to 15 inches, since January 1, 2015.

Streamflows were generally in the normal range at most sites across the State. Four index basins—two in southwestern N.Y. and two in the Adirondack Mountain region—reported above-normal flow conditions. Only one site, that in Suffolk County, reported below-normal flows. Due to mild temperatures, streamflows were not affected by ice, which is atypical for December. New York City reservoirs were collectively near normal capacity (about 86 percent) at the end of the month.

Groundwater levels were both above- and below-normal levels across the State, with no discernible pattern. Only 28 percent of the reporting sites, reported water levels within their respective normal ranges. Sixty-six percent of the sites—with a similar percentage for both water-table and bedrock wells—reported low-to-very-low water levels. With only two exceptions, the wells with very-low water levels were sites with less than 13 years of record.

Exceedance percentages shown on the Hydrologic Conditions Mapper are calculated for individual USGS sites. This information along with additional information from other Federal, State, and local agencies assist the NYSDEC and the State Drought Management Task Force to evaluate regional conditions for determination of drought classifications.

Let me know if you have any questions.