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Drought Advisory Lifted for Northeast, Connecticut River, and Central Massachusetts

[Statewide map.](#)

[Drought data, reports and water conservation tips.](#)

BOSTON – Friday, November 19, 2010 – Following several weeks of drought conditions in three regions across the state, the Massachusetts Drought Management Task Force has found groundwater levels and precipitation levels have returned to normal conditions warranting the removal of a Drought Advisory in three of the Commonwealth's six water resources management regions.

The task force moved to lift the drought advisories for the Northeast, Connecticut River, and Central Regions of Massachusetts during their meeting held at the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) headquarters in Framingham today.

The drought advisories called for state, regional and local water officials to monitor water supplies and fire danger conditions. The task force found conditions warranting a Drought Advisory for the Northeast and Central Regions of Massachusetts beginning on August 13. On October 15, the task force added the Connecticut River region to the drought advisory.

The task force, which includes 14 state and federal agency representatives, found above normal precipitation and ground water levels returned to normal or above normal in all regions across the state during October. Stream flow also returned to normal or above normal statewide by the end of October. November precipitation is on track for normal or above normal readings statewide. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) supply system continues to be well within normal operating range. Other surface water reservoirs remain below normal levels and the task force as well as local water suppliers will continue to monitor water levels. Despite the task force's decision today, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and its agencies encourage residents to conserve water as a matter of good practice.

A drought advisory is the second of five levels of drought conditions outlined in the Massachusetts Drought Management Plan (Normal, Advisory, Watch, Warning and Emergency) and indicates a level of dry conditions that warrants closer tracking by agencies at all levels of

government. Of particular concern this year was fire danger, with dry soil conditions allowing fire to burn deep and spread rapidly to large areas.

A Drought Advisory required the Drought Management Task Force to meet on a regular basis to more closely assess conditions across the state, coordinate dissemination of information to the public and help state, federal and local agencies coordinate any responses that may be needed in the future.

The state's rainfall in the Northeast and Central Regions showed cumulative precipitation deficits of up to nine inches below normal for the months of April through September and ground water levels also declined. At the end of September, 107 municipalities had informed the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that they have instituted outdoor water use restrictions to conserve water. At the end of October, the six-month precipitation deficit had declined to less than three inches.

During October, the Northeast Region recorded 4.45 inches of precipitation or 121 percent of normal. The Central Region recorded 6.01 inches or 157 percent of normal and the Connecticut River Region recorded 8.04 inches or 220 percent of normal. In the six months preceding, the three drought advisory regions recorded 63 to 76 percent of normal precipitation. As of November, these regions are recording 87 percent to 92 percent of normal.

A Drought Advisory is based on thresholds contained in the Massachusetts Drought Management Plan, a blueprint developed by the Drought Management Task Force to guide state activities in response to droughts and extended periods of dry weather.

The Massachusetts Drought Management Task Force comprises representatives of MEMA, EEA, DEP, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Fish and Game, Department of Agricultural Resources, Department of Public Health, MWRA, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Weather Service, Massachusetts Water Works Association and the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards.

MEMA is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and manmade. For additional information about MEMA, go to the MEMA website at www.mass.gov/mema.

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