

## Water Supply Conditions – August 31, 2010

New Jersey remains relatively dry as the peak summer season draws to a close, although significant rains in key locations during the third week of August were certainly welcome. A Drought Watch for the Northeast Drought Region remains in effect.

The recent rains provided much-needed relief and recovery to reservoir storage in key reservoir systems within the Northeast drought region. Other areas of the state, however (specifically, the central core from Union/Somerset Counties south to Camden/Atlantic Counties to the coast) have received only fractions of expected summer rainfall, which is reflected in drought indicators in associated drought regions.

Most of the precipitation fell in the extreme northern and southern portions of the State and sated parched conditions, at least temporarily. The greatest rainfall amounts occurred in the watershed feeding United Water New Jersey's (UWNJ) reservoirs, where storage that had been dropping quickly before the rains rose dramatically to levels above the long-term average. The rainfall prompted a system-wide water emergency for UWNJ customers in Bergen/Hudson counties to be lifted on August 30, 2010. The rains also briefly stabilized storage in other reservoirs that had been declining sharply.

The current drought indicators are a mixed bag: the precipitation indicator for precipitation remains moderately dry in all drought regions but could soon drop to severely dry in some areas. Stream flows are severely dry in all but the Coastal North and Coastal South drought regions, where they are moderately dry. Unconfined ground water levels remain severely dry in the Northwest and Central region but are moderately dry in the remaining drought regions. Storage in the State's principal surface water reservoirs remains within the normal range.

With a return to hot, dry weather predicted for the beginning of September, water demands are expected to rise. New Jersey DEP staff continues to monitor weather and hydrologic conditions, water use trends, and other relevant information in order to gauge the status of the state's water supplies.

The public should continue to use water wisely, particularly since there is no indication of a return to more normalized rainfall for the near future.

### Useful Water Conservation Tips

1. Do not over-water lawns and landscapes – 2 times per week for 30 minutes (in the cool of the morning or late evening) is enough to keep grass green.
2. Use a hand-held nozzle with auto shut-off to water bushes, shrubs, flowers, etc.
3. To save water (and money!) in the home, fix leaky faucets and pipes.
4. Turn off the faucet while brushing teeth and shaving.
5. Run washing machines and dishwashers only when full.
6. Install high-efficiency, water saving toilets, faucets and showerheads.

A complete list of water conservation tips at ([www.njdrought.org/ideas.html](http://www.njdrought.org/ideas.html)).