



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
North Central Division

# GREAT LAKES LEVELS

## UPDATE, NO. 17

### 3 DECEMBER 1986

The record high Great Lakes levels have continued and conditions for sustaining damage to the lakes' shoreland continue to be very threatening. The Corps of Engineers' "Self-Help" program, which I discussed last month, is continuing. The program includes distribution of sandbags, sand and plastic sheeting to enable threatened communities to construct sandbag dikes to prevent flooding. Details of the program have been explained to the affected states and counties. Some commitments to participate have been received and materials provided.

Lake Superior basin precipitation was slightly above normal during November while all the other Great Lakes basins received light precipitation (about 1/2 to 3/4 of the normal amount). New record highs for the month of November were set on Lakes Erie, St. Clair and Michigan-Huron. New record monthly highs for Lakes Michigan-Huron and St. Clair have been set continuously for over a full year now. The Lake Erie level has been less than its record monthly high only once, in April, since October 1985. Lake Superior levels are extremely high, but not setting records. Lake Ontario is now approaching record levels. The attached bulletin shows that all the Great Lakes are predicted to remain extremely high through the end of May 1987.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) is continuing to direct the outflows for the two Great Lakes that are regulated. The Lake Superior outflow is at its specified Plan 1977 outflow setting. The Lake Ontario outflow is being regulated under an emergency action, known as Criterion (k) and provided for in the IJC's Orders of Approval. The emergency action through November has reduced the Lake Ontario level by about 3.0 feet. Shipping interests have been informed of the higher St. Lawrence River velocities and strong cross-currents created by the overdischarges dictated by the emergency action.

The Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, using an emergency authority, has contracted for removal of the barge lodged against the Peace Bridge at the head of the Niagara River, which is impeding the flow of the river by 6,000-7,000 cfs. The removal is expected to be completed in December.

Under the authority of Public Law 84-99, the Corps of Engineers has continued with the Advance Measures program, which consists of constructing preventive works prior to a flood threat to life and property. The only change in the status of the program since my November 3rd update is the completion of the Eastlake, Ohio project. Efforts at three other sites, the Village of Quanicassee, Michigan, Wightmans Grove, Ohio, and the Edgewater area of Chicago, Illinois are continuing, but no construction has been started.

The Corps is also authorized to assist local communities in responding to actual flooding situations, to supplement maximum state and local efforts. Requests for

assistance should be directed through local and state disaster assistance agencies. For Great Lakes basin technical assistance or information, please contact one of the following Corps of Engineers District Offices:

For New York, Penn. & Ohio  
Colonel Daniel R. Clark  
Cdr, Buffalo District  
1776 Niagara Street  
Buffalo, NY 14207-3199  
(716) 876-5454-Ext. 2201

For Mich., Minn. & Wisc.  
Colonel Robert F. Harris  
Cdr, Detroit District  
P.O. Box 1027  
Detroit, MI 48231-1027  
(313) 226-6440 or  
226-6441

For Ill. & Indiana  
LTC Frank R. Finch  
Cdr, Chicago District  
219 S. Dearborn St.  
6th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60604-1797  
(312) 353-6400

The "Help Yourself" brochure is still available from the District Offices listed above or from this office: North Central Division, 536 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605-1592, telephone: (312) 353-6364.

Near-shore wave warnings are provided by various National Weather Service Offices for certain portions of the Great Lakes. Information can normally be heard on the National Weather Service's local weather radio broadcasts noted below:

<u>Lake</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>VHF/FM Freq.</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>VHF/FM Freq.</u>
Superior	Duluth, MN	162.550 MHz	Huron	Alpena, MI	162.550 MHz
Superior	Houghton, MI	162.400 MHz	St. Clair	Detroit, MI	162.550 MHz
Superior	Marquette, MI	162.550 MHz	Erie	Toledo, OH	162.550 MHz
Superior	Sault Ste. Marie, MI	162.550 MHz	Erie	Sandusky, OH	162.400 M'
Michigan	Green Bay, WI	162.550 MHz	Erie	Cleveland, OH	162.550 MHz
Michigan	Milwaukee, WI	162.400 MHz	Erie	Erie, PA	162.400 MHz
Michigan	Chicago, IL	162.550 MHz	Erie	Buffalo, NY	162.500 MHz
Michigan	Grand Rapids, MI	162.550 MHz	Ontario	Rochester, NY	162.500 MHz
Michigan	Traverse City, MI	162.400 MHz			

Shoreline residents should pay attention to the weather situation. If severe storms occur this fall and early winter, the amount of damage could be very severe. Properties never damaged before may now be subject to damage. Again, I cannot over-emphasize the need for shore property owners to take immediate steps to organize and plan now, in advance of any major storm events.

These updates will accompany the monthly bulletin until the lakes return to safe levels.

  
JOSEPH PRATT  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding