

News Release

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U.S. Geological Survey

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Record Low Water Levels Set in November

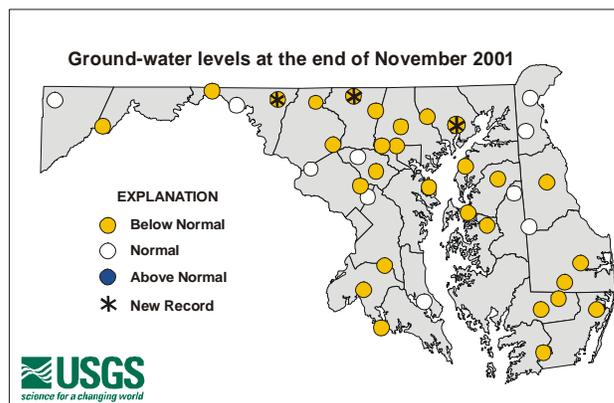
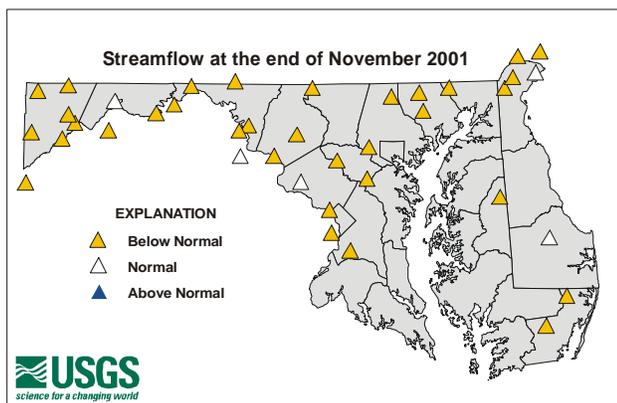
Low rainfall and warm temperatures in November have contributed to record low streamflow and ground-water levels, according to hydrologists at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Baltimore, Maryland. Streamflow into the Chesapeake Bay was the lowest for November since records began in 1937, and just below the previous record set in 1964. Above-normal rain or snow is crucial in the coming winter months to replenish the low streamflow and ground-water levels in order to avoid drought conditions next spring and summer.

Streamflow decreased through November and was below normal at 87 percent of the USGS gaging stations across Maryland and Delaware. The monthly streamflow in the Potomac River near Washington, D.C. was 78 percent below normal. This is the second lowest November streamflow since 1937. Streamflow at Deer Creek and Winters Run in Harford County set several new record daily lows for November (see real-time graphs <http://md.water.usgs.gov/realtime/>).

Streamflow entering the Chesapeake Bay averaged 9.3 bgd (billion gallons per day), which is 75 percent below the long-term average for November. Streamflow has been below average since January, except for April (see graphs at <http://md.water.usgs.gov/monthly/bay.html>).

Storage in the Baltimore Reservoir system decreased to 68 percent of capacity in November. Rainfall in November (and October) was more than 2 inches below normal across Maryland and Delaware, according to the Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center 30 day precipitation map.

Record low ground-water levels for November were set in water-table observation wells in Carroll, Harford and Washington Counties (see graphs at <http://md.water.usgs.gov/groundwater/>). Water levels in wells were also significantly below normal in Baltimore, Charles, Howard, Montgomery, Somerset, Queen Annes, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties.



For news release and images, go to http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/press_release/2001/2001-12-03.html

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