

**WATER RESOURCES BOARD
INTER-OFFICE MEMO**

To: Public Drinking Water Protection Committee
From: Beverly O'Keefe, Supervising Planner
Date: June 29, 2005
Subject: **Drought Update: Current Water Conditions**

BACKGROUND: Pursuant to State Guide Plan Element 724: The Rhode Island Drought Management Plan, the Water Resources Board is required to assess water conditions monthly. Staff has assembled climate information from a variety of sources to monitor the potential for drought conditions in Rhode Island.

The **NOAA National Weather Service** reports precipitation through May was normal (see Attachment A).

The **USGS Water Conditions Statement** reports groundwater conditions throughout southeastern Rhode Island ending May was generally **above normal** in all but extreme northern Rhode Island (Attachment B). Water levels in the rest of Rhode Island were generally **normal**. The U.S. Geological Survey May 2005 Water Conditions Statements marked one well with a new high ground water level in Rhode Island (Richmond 600). No new low ground water levels were identified in Rhode Island. Surface water flows at the end of May 2005 were generally above normal for southern Rhode Island. Flows in northern Rhode Island were generally normal. The Scituate Reservoir on June 28, 2005 was measured at 283.09 FEET (97.3 % of capacity).

The **NOAA Drought Severity Index and Crop Moisture Index** values for Rhode Island, period ending 28 June, shows a very moist spell (Attachment C).

DISCUSSION

Water conditions for Rhode Island were generally above normal during the month of May. Anecdotally, the increase in daily temperatures through the month of June has increased the demand for water, and some water suppliers have imposed water restrictions on the Water Resources Board website. (see Current Water Restrictions, <http://www.wrb.state.ri.us/wdata/waterrestr.html>).

RECOMMENDATIONS : Information only.

ATTACHMENT A: NOAA NWS RI Precipitation Report May 2005
<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/fcsts/BOSCLIPVD.html>

ATTACHMENT B: USGS Water Conditions Statement – May 2005
http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water_const/water_conditions_200505.htm
http://ma.water.usgs.gov/current_cond/cwrc_gw.htm
http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water/water_s.htm

ATTACHMENT C: NOAA NCEP Palmer Drought Severity & Crop Moisture Index - June 2005
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/regional_monitoring/palmer.gif