

PORT AND SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT

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LOW WATER LEVELS IMPACT PORT OF GREEN BAY

Lower water levels are not new at this time of year

For Immediate Release

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(Green Bay, WI) – The Port of Green Bay is feeling the impact of low water levels. Lake Michigan’s water level has caused businesses to take in less cargo than anticipated for this time of year. “The federal government maintains the navigation channel to authorized depth based on a fixed elevation. Changes in actual water levels result in more or less actual water depth.” stated Port Manager Dean Haen. “When water levels drop ships must carry less cargo to safely travel in and out of the port.”

A reduction of cargo means that costs will affect port businesses. Ship crew and fuel costs stay the same, no matter how much cargo it is carrying. “It can have a trickling effect on the economy,” Haen stated.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says Lake Michigan is approximately 2-4 inches lower than a year ago and it is expected to decline by another inch. The Great Lakes are forecasted to be below their water levels of a year ago.

Water levels depend on our climate throughout the year. Warmer winter temperatures, less snow, and dry summers all affect water levels.

Despite lower water levels, waterborne transportation is still the most economical and safest form of transportation for bulk raw materials. Reporting through June indicates that the port has taken in a total of 680,793 metric tons of cargo, mainly consisting of cement, coal, limestone and liquid asphalt.

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