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September water supply above normal in most of Alberta

Water supply conditions in southern Alberta remain above average after another month of well above normal precipitation. South of Edmonton, September precipitation was above normal, while areas to the north recorded below to much below normal precipitation.

Precipitation totals for the water year (November 2004 through September 2005) were generally above normal to much above normal in most areas of the province. This has resulted in water storage in southern Alberta being average to above-average for this time of the year. Areas in north central Alberta, including Edmonton and Grande Prairie, and in the extreme southeast corner of the province, recorded below normal precipitation during the same time period.

As a result of above-normal precipitation in southern Alberta this summer, total natural runoff volumes for the year (March through September) were much above average in the Red Deer, North Saskatchewan and Bow River basins, and in the northern half of the Oldman River basin. Natural inflow volumes into the Dickson Dam were the fourth highest in 91 years of record, while volumes in most of these other areas were among the 15 highest on record. Locations in higher terrain, such as the Bighorn Reservoir (average) and the Bow River at Banff (much below average), recorded lower natural runoff volumes because the June storms did not reach the back ranges of mountains.

Other Highlights (As of October 1, 2005):

- Water storage in the major irrigation reservoirs in the Oldman River basin is above average with the exception of the Waterton Reservoir, which is average.
- Water storage is above average in the major hydroelectric and irrigation reservoirs of the Bow River basin, except for Spray Lake, which is average.
- Water storage is average at Glennifer Lake, the Red Deer River basin's major reservoir.
- Water storage levels in the North Saskatchewan River basin are currently above average at Brazeau and Bighorn Reservoirs.

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