

## ONLINE ACCESS TO USGS WATER-RESOURCES DATA

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### ABSTRACT

NWISWeb (National Water Information System Web; <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>) provides access to water-resources data at approximately 1.5 million sites across the United States. The types of data collected are varied, but mostly fit into the broad categories of surface water and ground water. Surface-water data, such as gage height (stage) and streamflow (discharge), are collected at major rivers, lakes, and reservoirs. Ground-water data, such as water level, are collected at wells and springs. Water-quality data are available for both surface water and ground water. Examples of water-quality data collected are physical attributes such as temperature, specific conductance, and pH, and chemical constituents such as nutrients, pesticides, and volatile organic compounds. Other available data types include climate and biology.

NWISWeb serves current and historical data, including provisional and final data. Data are available for the historical period of record, which at some sites spans more than 100 years. Data are retrieved by category of data, such as surface water, ground water, or water quality, and by geographic area. Subsequent web pages allow further refinement by selecting specific information and by defining the output desired. Real-time data are available at more than 8,600 surface-water sites and almost 1,100 ground-water sites for immediate use by water-resources managers and anyone needing current information.

USGS water data are also available as water-year reports (<http://wdr.water.usgs.gov/>). Prior to 1962, data were generally published in USGS Water-Supply Papers at various intervals and organized regionally by major drainage basins. From 1962 through 2005, a separate Water-Data Report series was produced annually and organized by states. Data reports prior to 2006 were designed and produced as paper documents. Electronic versions of the reports have also been available since 2003 and some as early as the middle 1990's. Beginning with Water Year 2006, annual data reports are being provided as individual electronic Site Data Sheets, and are linked through a national web page for retrieval, download, and localized printing on demand. The 2006 report included data for more than 12,300 surface-water and 7,600 ground-water sites. The national web page includes tabular and map interfaces for search, query, display and download of data. Automated Data Report Processing procedures have been implemented in all USGS Water Science Centers for rapid production of Site Data Sheets using the USGS National Water Information System. These procedures ensure consistent presentation of USGS water-resources data throughout the nation, improve quality assurance of metadata, and support the release of approved USGS data sooner than could be achieved using any previous approach.

### KEYWORDS:

Water data, NWISWeb, National Water Information System Web