



METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT OVER GREAT BRITAIN

AT 0900 ON 20 DECEMBER 1978

The first day following the publication of the previous bulletin (6 December 1978) was dry over almost the whole of the country, but thereafter followed a spell of very wet, unsettled weather. This spell decisively brought to an end the long period with below average rainfall which had been apparent over England and Wales since the second week in August and which had been responsible for the large end-of-November accumulation of soil moisture deficits. It is estimated that general rainfall over England and Wales for the 8 days, 7th to 14th, was about 70 mm, an unusually large value for such a period. The period was wet over Scotland, too, but amounts were not generally as large as those over England and Wales. The 7th was the wettest day over England and Wales generally and the 8th the wettest day over Scotland. Thunderstorms were widespread over England on 13th and also occurred in eastern Kent, accompanied by heavy rain, on 16th. The 14th and 15th were very wet days in East Midlands and Lincolnshire. The last few days of the fortnight were much drier; snowfall occurred widely in Scotland on these days but amounts were not generally large.

Average rainfall for the fortnight was exceeded over most of England except the north-west and more than twice the average was recorded in a wide area extending from southern central England through the East Midlands and Lincolnshire to the north-east coasts of England and Scotland. Most of Scotland had less than average rainfall.

Soil moisture deficits decreased sharply over central and eastern areas of England in the first week of the fortnight but the decrease was much less marked in the second week. An apparent increase in deficit in north Wales and north-west England areas is due to a few dry days at the end of the period: soils there are virtually at field capacity and are shown as such on the maps. Deficits are still high for the time of year in east Midlands, East Anglia and south-east England.

RATE OF SUBSCRIPTION: £15.00 per season (post free)

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Issued on 21 December 1978

ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT (S.M.D)

AT 09 GMT ON 20 DEC 1978

River Area	Estimated Areal	Change during the week ending 09 GMT on	
	S.M.D. MM	20 Dec 78 MM	13 Dec 78 MM
Northumbrian	3.4	- 0.6	- 9.3
Yorkshire	11.7	- 8.8	- 24.8
Trent	11.6	- 11.6	- 29.4
Lincolnshire	27.0	- 15.8	- 32.8
Welland and Nene	37.9	- 11.9	- 34.0
Great Ouse	49.0	- 8.9	- 32.6
Norfolk and Suffolk	49.7	- 4.9	- 26.2
Essex	73.3	- 7.3	- 32.3
Lee Division	52.3	- 7.3	- 44.3
Thames Conservancy	42.1	- 7.9	- 52.6
London Area	43.4	- 9.2	- 55.8
Kent	54.9	- 15.3	- 41.2
Sussex	33.3	- 13.7	- 57.3
Hampshire	20.1	- 2.1	- 58.7
Isle of Wight	43.1	- 5.8	- 61.7
Upper Thames	39.4	- 7.6	- 47.3
Avon and Dorset	19.2	- 5.3	- 56.8
Devon	20.3	- 3.8	- 21.6
Cornwall	6.8	- 2.1	- 17.7
Somerset	18.5	- 8.4	- 39.2
Bristol Avon	31.9	- 12.6	- 43.5
Severn	20.3	- 8.9	- 24.9
Wye	7.1	- 5.8	- 26.7
Usk	2.9	- 6.3	- 26.1
Glamorgan	0.6	- 5.0	- 12.9
South West Wales	0.3	+ 0.3	- 0.7
Gwynedd	0.3	+ 0.3	- 0.1
Dee and Clwyd	0.3	+ 0.3	- 1.7
Mersey and Weaver	0.3	+ 0.3	- 0.9
Lancashire	0.3	+ 0.3	0.0
Cumbria	0.3	+ 0.3	- 0.1

NB Apart from normal changes these differences also reflect retrospective adjustments after receipt of additional data.



