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Progress made on groundwater, Menino said



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Mayor [Thomas M. Menino](#) said the Hub has made progress on groundwater levels in areas of the city where wood piling building foundations can be damaged by low water levels.

“Boston continues to work with our community, state, and federal partners to build awareness around the importance of groundwater levels, and the effects lowered levels can have on both our natural and manmade environment,” Menino said in a statement.

The neighborhoods impacted by groundwater levels include the Fenway, Back Bay, South End, Bay Village, flat of Beacon Hill, Chinatown, Leather District, Bulfinch Triangle, North End/Downtown waterfronts and the Fort Point Channel.

Starting with the establishment of the Boston Groundwater Trust to monitor groundwater levels, Menino signed the Memo of Understanding. Under the agreement, all of the public agencies with responsibility for underground infrastructure promised to share information and repair potential causes of low groundwater levels, the mayor said.

Agencies including Boston Water and Sewer, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, MBTA, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Massachusetts Department of Transportation have made investments in repairs that have removed multiple potential sources of groundwater drawdown, Menino said. Boston established a Groundwater Conservation Overlay District that requires anyone undertaking construction to make sure not to reduce groundwater levels and to recharge rainwater into the ground. As a result of the efforts, Boston has begun to see increases in groundwater levels in many areas where they have been below levels that could lead to piling damage, Menino said.

For example, in the Back Bay, DCR and BWSC have cooperated on a system that takes water that drains from the Storrow Drive tunnel and recharges it into the ground beneath Back Street; because of this effort, groundwater levels in this stretch have increased by around two feet, the city said.