

Q. How many inches of water evaporate from the lakes each summer?

A. Evaporation rates are often estimated based upon evaporation measured by the National Weather Service at a relatively small number of sites using calibrated pans, from which water loss is measured daily. The water lost from the pans can then be correlated to evaporation from a free water surface, such as a lake, by use of a pan coefficient computed by the National Weather Service. According to "NOAA Technical Report NWS 33", published in 1982, approximately 39½ inches of water evaporate from a free water surface each year in the Dickinson County area. Of this total, approximately 30 inches evaporates during the months of May through October.

Based on National Weather Service evaporation data found in "NOAA Technical Report NWS 34", also published in 1982, the monthly evaporation would be as follows: 5.3 inches in May, 6.1 inches in June, 6.3 inches in July, 5.4 inches in August, 4.0 inches in September and 3.2 inches in October. It should be noted that these are annual averages, and the actual evaporation rate may differ significantly from year to year depending on meteorological conditions.