

September 2011



Drought in Texas



A special e-newsletter from the Texas Water Resources Institute about dealing with the Texas drought

Texas forests face record-breaking danger



On a recent Facebook wall, someone posted "Texas is on fire." While not exactly true, this year has been the worst fire season in Texas' recorded history, according to **Tom Boggus**, [Texas Forest Service](#) director.

Started during the Labor Day weekend, the massive [Bastrop County Complex fire](#) combined with the Union Chapel fire had burned more than 34,000 acres and destroyed 1,554 homes. Two people were found dead. In the first fourteen days of September, the forest service responded to more than 325 fires.

The main culprit causing these fires: the record-breaking severe drought of 2011.

Resources and tips for landowners from the Texas Forest Service

- [Drought, Wildfire and Forest Health](#)
- [Don't depend on Mother Nature to water your drought-stricken trees](#)
- [Best Water Methods for Drought-stricken Trees](#)
- [Help available for property recovery after a wildfire](#)
- [Predictive Services Information](#)
- [Burn ban information](#)
- [Daily fire danger map](#)
- [Forecast fire danger](#)
- [Keetch-Byram Drought Index \(KBDI\)](#)
- [National Weather Service](#)
- [Remote Automated Weather Stations \(RAWS\)](#)
- [Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment \(SWRA\)](#)
- [Fuels/Fire Danger](#)
- [Fire Outlooks](#)

Wildfires in Texas: A personal account from the Bastrop County fire



As the [Bastrop County Complex fire](#) swept through thousands of acres and homes **Sept. 4**, one local homeowner did not grasp the danger rapidly approaching as he was evacuated from his home.

Mike Kubicek, who has lived in his Bastrop home nearly 10 years, was

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Resources

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[Summer 2011 issue of txH2O](#)

Drought in the news

[Texas crop, weather for Sept. 13, 2011](#)

[Researchers use drought to solve future problems](#)

[NOAA's Climate Prediction Center: La Niña is back](#)

[El Paso Weathers Drought, Thanks To Lawn Policy](#)

[Forget Irene: The Drought in Texas Is the Catastrophe That Could Really Hurt](#)

[Record-Setting Agricultural Disaster in Texas Gets 'Worse by the Day'](#)

[Most Texas Cities Just Begin to Feel Pinch of Mammoth Drought, While Rural Damage Is Severe](#)

[Texas agricultural drought losses reach record \\$5.2 billion](#)

[Online calculator helps homeowners](#)

evacuated on a Labor Day weekend that he will now never forget.

"I could see the smoke rolling in front and heard the sound coming in behind," said Kubicek.

[preserve lawns while saving water](#)

[Drought management focus of October Ranch Management University workshop](#)

Drought perspectives: Nueces River Authority



Staff at the [Nueces River Authority](#) (NRA) are more frequently hearing the statement, "No one now alive has ever seen it this dry," as the Nueces River Basin, along with most of the state, is in the depths of the drought.

Local tanks and many of the Nueces' tributaries are reduced to potholes or have become completely dry, and in some areas, residents line up to pump water from remaining pools.

Power generation and consumers feel the effects of drought

Continued drought, decreasing water availability and increasing water temperatures are affecting power plants, which in turn affects energy consumers throughout the state, said experts at [The University of Texas at Austin](#).

"If we see this drought continue, combined with this heat wave, we might see power plants throttling back or curtailing their power output to avoid overheating the water," said **Dr. Michael Webber**, associate director of the [Center for International Energy and Environmental Policy](#) in the Jackson School of Geosciences and assistant professor of mechanical engineering at The University of Texas at Austin.

Tips for power and water consumers during drought

According to **Dr. Michael Webber** and **Ashlynn Stillwell** at [The University of Texas at Austin](#), the best tip for consumers to keep in mind is that "Saving electricity saves water."

Prepared for the drought, El Paso leads the way in reclaimed water



How can you turn a desert city into a city with a sustainable water supply?

For El Paso, the answer was not only aggressively conserving water, but also reclaiming wastewater. The thought of recycling treated wastewater may sound unglamorous, but as Texas is sinking further into a disastrous drought, [El Paso Water Utilities](#) (EPWU) is receiving an abundance of positive attention for its reclaimed water program.

Drought Preparedness Council works to protect Texas

The [Drought Preparedness Council](#), authorized and established by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999, is charged with supporting drought management efforts in the state.

Drought in Texas is a special e-mail newsletter of [Texas Water Resources Institute](#), part of [Texas AgriLife Research](#), the [Texas AgriLife Extension Service](#), and the [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#) at [Texas A&M University](#).

If you have information for possible inclusion in **Drought in Texas** please e-mail **Leslie Lee** at lhlee@ag.tamu.edu, call 979.862.7139, or contact us on Twitter (twitter.com/TxWRI) and include your contact information. All submissions may be edited for grammar and style.

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