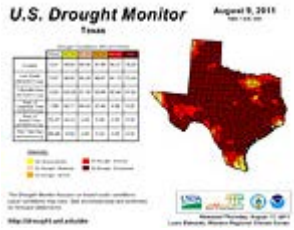
August 17, 2011

Drought in Texas

Texas Water Resources Institute
make every drop count

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

State Climatologist on the latest drought information



The drought in Texas continues to worsen as most areas in the state have yet to receive the significant rainfall needed to help start pulling out of drought conditions, according to Texas' state climatologist.

"If we don't get 4.5 inches of rain between now and the end of September, we will have the driest one year period ever surpassing 1956, which is the drought of record for most places," said **Dr. John Nielsen-Gammon**, Texas State Climatologist and professor of atmospheric sciences at Texas A&M University. "Since October 1 (2010), we've had a little more than 9 inches of rain on average for the state; normal would be about 23 inches, so we're well below 50 percent."

Nielsen-Gammon said that the outlook for the typically wettest months of the year-September and October-and the winter looked quite promising until the last month or so. However, he said this outlook can change as fast as the Texas weather.

"Some of the indications now say that we might see another La Nina developing, which will tilt the odds toward another dry winter," he said. "The thing to worry about is the 50 percent chance of a La Nina this winter and the possibility that the drought will continue and water supplies will continue to get worse."

If the drought continues as it has thus far, Nielsen-Gammon suspects that "sometime next year, some places in the state will exceed their drought of record, and with the increase of population and the increase of water use, we'll start seeing some serious problems."

He said the hope is that during the next few months entities such as municipalities, water districts and other water managers and controllers will work out and try to figure out, "Well, what would happen if we had another dry year like this one? How much projection in water use would that be? What restrictions would we have to put in? What's our fallback position if we have to get water from another source? Is that fallback position a source for 10 other locations? They may not be able to supply us."

"Not often you can see a disaster coming a year in advance, and there's certainly the odds are against a disaster next year, but the odds are a lot better now than they would be in other years," Nielsen-Gammon said. "So this is a rare opportunity to plan ahead for a disaster that may be coming and prevent it from becoming a disaster."

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Resources

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Summer 2011 issue of *txH2O*

Texas Water Journal, Vol. 2, No. 1

Drought in the news

Texas agricultural drought losses reach record $5.2 billion

Drought officially 2nd-worst on record in Texas

Drought impact moves toward record: Statistics show that Texas agriculture is taking its hardest hit ever

Online calculator helps homeowners preserve lawns while saving water

Drought management focus of October Ranch Management University workshop

Rebuilding herds after the drought

During this time of drought, he reminds everyone to keep water conservation practices in mind. Separate optional uses of water, such as watering lawns to keep them green, from mandatory uses of water like drinking water.

"The more water that gets conserved now, the more water is available for next year if the drought goes on into next year," Nielsen-Gammon said.

More drought and water conservation information can be found through the Texas Water Resources Institute website at twri.tamu.edu.

Current drought pales in comparison with 1950s 'drought of record'

Drought is taking toll on Texas aquifers

AgriLife Extension Expert: Water well owners advised to practice conservation during historic drought

Agricultural and Wildlife Water Use

Strategies for drought management and recovery are critical to any agricultural operation. The following resources and fact sheets provide information for agricultural production and wildlife management.

- Drought resources: Agricultural Economics
  Drought resources: Animal Science
  Drought resources: Agricultural Engineering
  Drought resources: Ecosystem Science and Management (Range and Forestry)
  Drought resources: Soil and Crop Sciences
  Drought resources: Veterinary Medicine
  Provided by Texas AgriLife Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)
- Irrigation Training Program
  Rio Grande Basin Initiative
  Evaluation of Irrigation Efficiency Strategies for Far West Texas: Feasibility, Water Savings And Cost Consideration
  Institutional Adjustments for Coping with Prolonged and Severe Drought in the Rio Grande Basin
  Making water work: program trains farmers on latest irrigation tools' techniques *txH2O* magazine article
  Linking Texas Irrigation: Consortium communicates research, education projects *txH2O* magazine article
  Consortium for Irrigation Research and Education
  Provided by TWRI

In-Home Water Use

Water conservation begins at home, and every drop counts. Developing an attitude of conservation can help residential users save both water and money by conserving water during daily activities around the home. The following resources and facts sheet can help anyone learn how to conserve water in their home.

- Water Conservation Checklist for the Home
  Home Water Conservation Tips
  Provided by Texas AgriLife Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences
- What's your Water Footprint? *txH2O* magazine article
  Saving Public Resources *txH2O* magazine article
  Rainwater for the Future *txH2O* magazine article
  Provided by TWRI

Landscape Irrigation

By incorporating conservation principles into their landscape management, homeowners and professionals can maintain attractive landscapes while conserving water. The following resources and fact sheets provide information on how to achieve this balance.

- Earth-Kind: Water Conservation

Earth-Kind: Irrigation System Auditing
Earth-Kind: Low Volume Irrigation
Earth-Kind: Landscape Mulch
Provided by Texas AgriLife Extension Service Earth-Kind

- Drought Restrictions and Changes in your Landscape
  Provided by the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering
- Drought resources: Horticulture
  Provided by Texas EDEN
- Turfgrass issue of *txH2O*, Summer 2011
  Water Conscious Landscapes
  Provided by TWRI

Do you have questions about water? We can help.

TWRI fosters and communicates priority water resources research and educational outreach programs throughout Texas. We have extensive listings of water conservation and drought resources, in addition to our various publications. We produce txH2O, a magazine published three times per year that features water research and education in Texas.

This special newsletter is distributed in association with New Waves, TWRI's monthly email newsletter, which delivers breaking news about water resources education and research in Texas. To subscribe to TWRI publications, visit twri.tamu.edu/publications/subscribe.

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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