



DROUGHT

Drought is a natural phenomenon in which levels of rainfall or other types of precipitation are lower than average for an extended period of time, resulting in inadequate water supply. If droughts persist for long periods of time, they can pose a great danger to you and your family and your hydration.



How to Prepare for a Drought

- Know the four stages of a drought:
 - **Drought Watch**—The least dangerous, declared when a drought is developing. Public water suppliers will begin to conserve water. You should try to minimize water use.
 - **Drought Warning**—Public water suppliers and industries begin to update and implement their drought contingency plans in case of an emergency. You should minimize water use.
 - **Drought Emergency**—A state of emergency may be declared. Mandatory water restrictions may be instituted. Alternative water sources may be tapped.
 - **Drought Disaster**—A disaster may be declared and contingency plans put in place. Water is further rationed. You may receive emergency assistance.
- Stay aware of the weather and long periods without precipitation.
- Try to conserve the amount of water you use.

Water Conservation

- Conserve water indoors:
 - Check for water leaks around your home.
 - Consider installing low-flow toilets, faucets and shower heads.
 - Take shorter showers.
 - Do not leave the water running unnecessarily. Turn the faucet off when you are brushing your teeth, shaving or scrubbing dishes.
 - Do not waste water by waiting for it to heat up. Capture the cold water to use later or heat water on the stove.
 - Reuse water you wash vegetables in to water plants, etc.
 - Do not waste water on small laundry loads—set the washer on the proper water level.
- Conserve water outdoors:
 - When washing cars, turn the hose off instead of letting it run.
 - Wash the car on the lawn, so it gets watered simultaneously.
 - Do not overwater the lawn. It needs to be watered only every 5–7 days in hot weather and every 10–14 days the rest of the time.
 - Never leave sprinklers and hoses unattended—don't forget to turn them off.
 - Water lawn during designated times of the day.
 - Use the most water-efficient hoses and sprinklers.
 - Avoid ornamental water features (fountains) unless they recycle water.



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Water Conservation (Continued)

- Conserve water in the community:
 - Follow all water restrictions and water shortage rules.
 - Encourage neighbors to be water conscious.

What to Do If There Is a Drought

- Stay aware of the amount of water being used each day.
- While it is important that you are careful with the amount you consume, do not ration to the point of dehydration.
- Recycle water for household uses.
- Adhere to all guidelines and restrictions imposed by local or federal authorities.

Where to Find Additional Information

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—<https://www.ready.gov/drought>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—
 - <https://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/drought>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/drought/>
 - http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/docs/when_every_drop_counts.pdf
- American Red Cross—<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/drought>
- Ready Army—www.ready.army.mil

It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family and be informed about what might happen.

