



Drought

A lack of precipitation for an extended period of time can cause a drought. If droughts persist for long periods of time, they can pose a great danger to you, your family, and your hydration.

How to Prepare

- 1 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 your 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 your water use.
 - **Drought Emergency**—A state of emergency may be declared.
- 2 Stay aware of the weather and long periods without precipitation.
- 3 Try to conserve the amount of water you use, and never pour out water when there may be another use.

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.

Water Conservation

- Conserve water indoors:
 - » Check for water leaks or dripping faucets around your home, and repair them.
 - » Insulate your water pipes to reduce heat loss and breakage.
 - » 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.
- » Start a compost pile or dispose of food in the garbage to limit use of kitchen sink disposals that require a lot of water to operate properly.
- » Choose energy and water efficient appliances
- » Do not waste water on small laundry loads—set the washer on the proper water level.



Drought

- Conserve water outdoors:
 - » Plant native and drought tolerant plants and grasses.
 - » Water lawn during designated times of the day.
 - » 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 so you don't forget to turn them off.
 - » Use the most water efficient hoses and sprinklers.
 - » Install irrigation devices.
 - » Wash the car on the lawn, so it gets watered simultaneously.
 - » When washing cars, turn the hose off instead of letting it run.
 - » Avoid ornamental water features (fountains) unless they recycle water.
 - » Save rainwater where practical.
- 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.
- Place bucket in the shower to catch excess water for other uses (watering plants).
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily.
- Water lawn in several short sessions rather than one long one, in order for your lawn to better absorb moisture and avoid runoff.
- Use mulch to retain moisture in the soil.

Where to Find Additional Information

- Department of Homeland Security (Ready.gov) & FEMA—<http://www.Ready.gov/drought>
- U. S. Drought Portal—www.drought.gov

