

Drought Declaration in New Jersey

The agricultural community suffered through a fall drought and even those who did not suffer crop losses were impacted by extremely high irrigation costs. And farmers are currently concerned about what a dry spring may bring.

You may have noticed a difference between the USDA and NJDEP drought status. That's because the NJDEP drought status is based on drinking water supply, but the USDA status is based on agronomic factors.

USDA

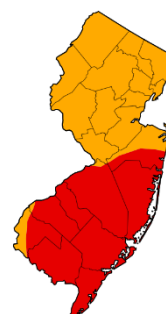
US Drought Monitor / USDA-FSA

The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a map that is updated each Thursday to show the location and intensity of drought across the country. Each week, experts look at precipitation totals compared to long-term averages and variables including temperatures, soil moisture, water levels in streams and lakes, snow cover, and meltwater runoff. Experts also check for water shortages and business interruptions.

The USDA drought declaration triggers availability of drought programs through USDA-FSA.



Scan here to visit the
US Drought Monitor



Map released: Weds. November 27, 2024
Data valid: November 26, 2024 at 7 a.m. EST

Intensity

None
D0 (Abnormally Dry)
D1 (Moderate Drought)
D2 (Severe Drought)
D3 (Extreme Drought)
D4 (Exceptional Drought)
No Data

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NJDEP

The NJDEP Division of Water Supply and Geoscience regularly monitors [water supply conditions](#). The Department's [drought website](#) has up to date information.

There are different types of droughts which affect sectors differently (e.g. meteorological, agricultural), this [NJDEP monitoring focuses on water supply drought](#).

Agricultural activities, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:19-13.2, are exempt from water restrictions during a drought emergency, unless specifically declared by the governor due to public health and safety.

If an agricultural water user cannot pump enough water from their well:

See page 3, and visit DEP's [Well Permitting website](#)



For more information scan to visit NJDEP Well Permitting

Emergency Source Approvals for Agricultural Certifications and Registrations (independent of NJDEP's declared drought status):

If a certification or registration holder faces a water shortage or water quality emergency, they may divert water from an uncertified source by following steps outlined on page 3 and on the NJDEP Water Supply Website.



For more
information scan to
visit NJDEP Water
Supply

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USDA and FSA

US Drought Monitor / USDA-FSA

The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a map that is updated each Thursday to show the location and intensity of drought across the country. The USDM uses a five-category system, labeled Abnormally Dry or D0, (a precursor to drought, not actually drought), and Moderate (D1), Severe (D2), Extreme (D3) and Exceptional (D4) Drought. Drought categories show experts' assessments of conditions related to dryness and drought including observations of how much water is available in streams, lakes, and soils compared to usual for the same time of year. The USDM began in 2000 and is a collaboration between the NDMC, NOAA and the USDA, who share the weekly author role for the product. The NDMC, based at University of Nebraska, Lincoln, leads the coordination of weekly drought monitor process and provides the maps, data and statistics to the public.

Where does this come from?

Each week, drought experts consider how recent precipitation totals across the country compare to their long-term averages. They check variables including temperatures, soil moisture, water levels in streams and lakes, snow cover, and meltwater runoff. Experts also check whether areas are showing drought impacts such as water shortages and business interruptions. Based on dozens of indicators, experts make their best judgments of regional-scale drought conditions, and then check their assessments with experts in the field before publishing weekly drought maps. Associated statistics show what proportion of various geographic areas are in each category of dryness or drought, and how many people are affected.

FSA PROGRAM TRIGGERS—Drought vs. Disaster Declaration

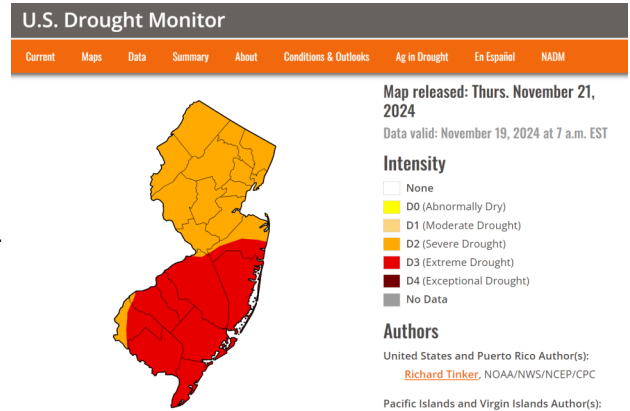
In order to have a drought designation for some programs (e.g. ERP) the area be designated at D2 for 3 weeks or D3 for any amount of time. This is not a requirement for disaster designations which only require an impact to 30% of a crop in a county. A drought designation can be a disaster designation, but a drought designation is not required for a disaster designation.

USDA Disaster Assistance

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist you in your recovery efforts following drought. Available programs and loans include: Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Tree Assistance Program (TAP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), Emergency Loan Program, and Emergency Conservation Program (ECP).

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, you must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

For more information on these programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov/disaster.



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Drought Declaration in New Jersey

NJDEP

The NJDEP Division of Water Supply and Geoscience regularly monitors various [water supply conditions](#) within the state based on the different [Water Supply Regions](#).

It should be noted that there are different types of droughts which affect sectors differently (e.g. meteorological, agricultural), this declaration focuses on water supply drought.

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:19-13.2, agricultural activities are exempt from water restrictions during a drought emergency, unless specifically declared by the governor due to public health and safety.

However, major permit modifications such as changes in water source or withdrawal quantity, or issuance new permits will be delayed or suspended in the event of a drought emergency.

In the event of a drought emergency declaration via administrative order (AO), mandatory restrictions are phased in. There are Four (4) phases of drought emergency.

Summary of N.J.A.C. 7:19, SUBCHAPTER 13. THE PRIORITY-BASED PHASE SYSTEM OF WATER RESTRICTION

Phase 1 - Available water supply levels determined to be below normal

Voluntary water conservation. Possible ban on adjustable water uses (watering lawns & landscaping (non-ag)). Ban on vehicle and street washing, fire-hydrant testing, use of water for outdoor recreational purposes.

Phase 2 - Substantial threat to public health and welfare

Residential Water rationing to 50gpd per person. Water purveyors provided a water use allocation target. Non-residential user subject to water emergency rate schedule.

Phase 3 – Further rationing required

Further rationing enacted. Selective curtailment of industrial users.

Phase 4 – Disaster

Public health and safety cannot be guaranteed. Water quality is of major concern. Maintenance of health facilities shall be at emergency levels. Industrial uses shall be further curtailed and selective closings shall occur. Interruptions in water service may be necessary.

Water Supply Status and Actions

Normal

Routine monitoring of water supply and meteorological indicators. All conditions normal.

Watch

Focus placed on voluntary reductions in demand through increased public awareness.

Current Status

Warning

DEP Commissioner issues order urging public to voluntarily use water sparingly; DEP may issue orders to purveyors to manage supplies in most affected regions.

Emergency

Governor orders mandatory restrictions on certain uses of water, usually phased in as conditions deteriorate.

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