

SEVERE WEATHER PREPARATION:

DROUGHT

Droughts are long periods when there is little or no rain, hail, sleet, or snow, which leads to a shortage in water supply. They can be dangerous and unpredictable, and can pose great threats to human life. Learn what you can do to lessen the impacts of drought in your community.

CAUSES OF DROUGHT

- Seasonally occurring droughts can be a normal weather pattern for some regions (deserts, etc); these areas are often prepared to deal with the impacts of drought.
- Using too much water during periods of normal rainfall can add to the severity of droughts when they occur.
- Some droughts are caused by shifts in precipitation and wind patterns that normally bring rain to certain areas.
- Impacts of climate change, like changing ocean currents and rising global surface temperatures, affect the moisture and temperature in the air and make droughts increasingly common.

DROUGHT IMPACTS

- Shortages in clean drinking water can pose health hazards for local people.
- The lack of available water may lead to low crop and livestock yields, which can cause malnutrition and economic stress in nearby communities.
- Dusty and dry conditions that accompany droughts can result in dangerous wildfires.
- Health problems become more and more common because of the poor water quality.
- Overall community mental health may suffer due to financial strain, lack of recreational activities, and even loss of life.

DROUGHT

- what you need to know -

PREVENTION

The best way to prepare for a drought is to conserve water. Make conserving water a part of your daily life.

STAY SAFE DURING

- Check on loved ones and those most vulnerable to the impacts of drought (children, elderly folks, and sick people).
- Do not light fires or matches outdoors, as the dry conditions can lead to wildfires
- Decrease overall personal water use however you can (see tips below).
- Spread information about drought safety to friends and family to cut back on community water use.
- Listen to health and safety officials for tips on water conservation as well as plans for evacuation in the event of emergency.

TIPS TO AVOID DROUGHT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Take shorter showers to reduce water waste.
- Operate washing machines only when they are full to minimize water usage.
- Don't flush toilets to dispose of bugs and tissues; instead, dispose of these in the trash to avoid wasting water.
- Check faucets, pipes, sprinklers and hoses regularly to ensure that they are working efficiently and don't leak.
- If you have a pool, consider installing a "water-saving pool filter."
- Get involved in local, state and regional decisions about water use and allocation.

For more information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/drought/implications.htm>