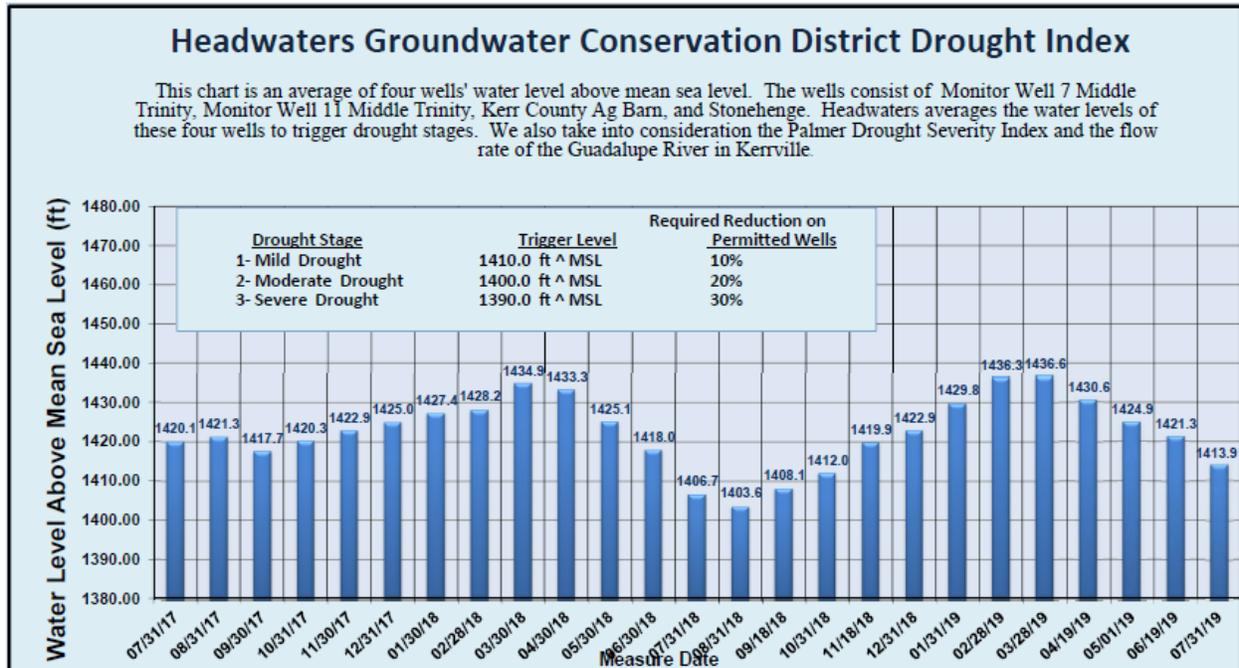


# HEADWATERS GROUNDWATER DISTRICT STATES POTENTIAL FOR DROUGHT STAGE

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According to the USDA, Kerr County has received 15.76" of rainfall for the year, which is not far below our average of 17.71" for this time of year, and the showers that we experienced in April, May, and June of this year have helped to somewhat sustain our aquifers. Historically, the Trinity Aquifer's water level builds in the fall and winter, then starts to drop around April and continues to do so through the summer. As we extend into the hottest months of the season and the chances for rain begin to decline, the Trinity Aquifer's water level will begin to drop more rapidly. As of the end of July, the water level in the Trinity Aquifer sits just 3.9 feet above the first Drought Stage trigger. Currently, the Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District has not announced any official drought stage conditions for Kerr County. The HGCD evaluates a combination of factors when instituting a drought stage. Those factors include the average water level in the aquifer of four specific monitor wells, the Flow Rate of the Guadalupe River at Kerrville, and the Palmer Drought Severity Index. While Headwaters has not initiated an official drought stage at this time, these combined factors indicate that there is potential for a drought stage to be triggered in the near future. If a drought stage is initiated, an official announcement will be made by the District via local newspaper announcements, the HGCD website, and through mailed notices to permitted well owners. More information about the District's Drought Contingency Plan and its restrictions can be found under the Resources menu at [www.hgcd.org](http://www.hgcd.org).

As a reminder, the Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District always encourages water conservation efforts such as repairing leaky faucets and toilets or replacing them with more water-efficient options, xeriscaping with drought-resistant plants, and minimizing lawn watering. Small things such as turning the faucet off while you brush your teeth or only running the dishwasher when it's full are small, easy ways that you can conserve water. If you run the water while you wait for it to get hot, consider capturing that water and using it on your household plants or re-bottling it as drinking water for your family. Using and regularly reapplying mulch to your flowerbeds is an added step that will help the soil retain moisture and reduce the amount of needed watering. If you have automatic sprinklers, stage the timer in several short sessions rather than one long session. This will allow the ground to absorb the moisture better. It will also prevent runoff. Also, check the sprinkler heads regularly to make sure that they are not broken or mistakenly spraying paved areas. For domestic well-users, leaks can occur in the plumbing between the well and the home. If the automatic pump turns on and off while there is no water being used, a leak could be present. Checking the pump regularly can give early insight and prevent a prolonged leak. It will also reduce the potential for an unnecessary and costly pump replacement.

Another example of water conservation is rainwater harvesting. Rainwater harvesting utilizes a home or building's rooftop to collect water. The rooftop provides a large surface area for rain to gather. A 1,000-square foot roof can collect 600 gallons of water from a one-inch rainfall. The best thing about rainwater is that it is free from many pollutants as well as salts, minerals, and other natural contaminants. Rainwater collection systems typically consist of gutters installed on a home or other structure that feed into a catchment of some sort, to include existing storage tanks, inexpensive rain barrels, or the water can be routed directly into an attractive rain garden.

During times of drought, some groundwater uses fall into the category of 'non-essential', which are discouraged by the District. Washing vehicles, using water to wash down sidewalks, driveways, or buildings, and pumping water into landscape-enhancing ponds are examples of these types of 'non-essential' uses, as defined in the District's Drought Contingency Plan.

Although Kerr County has not yet entered into a Drought Stage, the average of the drought index wells has steadily declined since March of this year. Consequently, the District encourages all water users to help preserve our water resources.

Additional useful information can be found on the following websites:

Conservation Tips for the Home: <https://agrilife.org/drought/your-home/>

Conservation Tips for the Yard: <https://agrilife.org/drought/your-lawn-garden/>

Palmer Drought Severity Index:

[http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/regional\\_monitoring/palmer.gif](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/regional_monitoring/palmer.gif)