

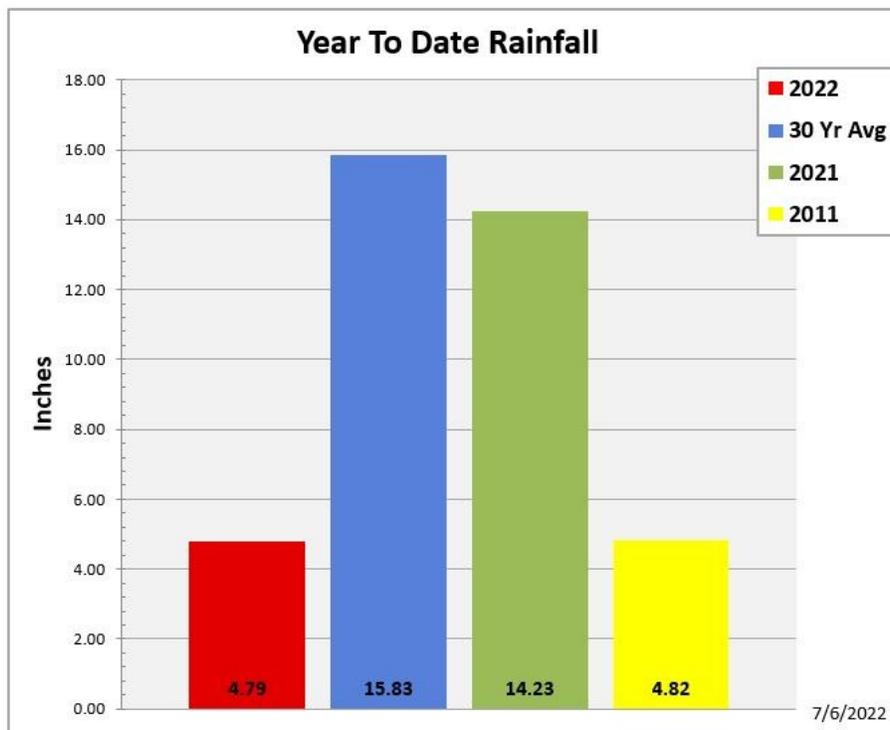


DISTRICT INITIATES STAGE 3 DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS

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July 6, 2022

The signs of drought are all around us in 2022 and it has been noticed not only in Kerr County, but across the state of Texas. Typically, the Texas Hill Country experiences precipitation in the fall, winter, and spring seasons and that precipitation is what recharges our groundwater aquifers, springs, rivers, and creeks. For Kerr County, the 30-year average rainfall from January through the end of June is 15.83". For 2011, when the previous severe drought occurred, the amount of rainfall for the same period of time was 4.82". With only 4.79" of rainfall to date in 2022 and only a small chance of relief from the current La Niña weather pattern that is generating our drought, this year is shaping up to be as rough as or worse than 2011. This lack of rain, coupled with the beginning of our normal hot and dry summer, has prompted a noticeable drop in the aquifer levels in Kerr County. Additionally, the Palmer Drought Index has almost all of Texas in Extreme Drought and the Guadalupe River is currently in a state of low flow.



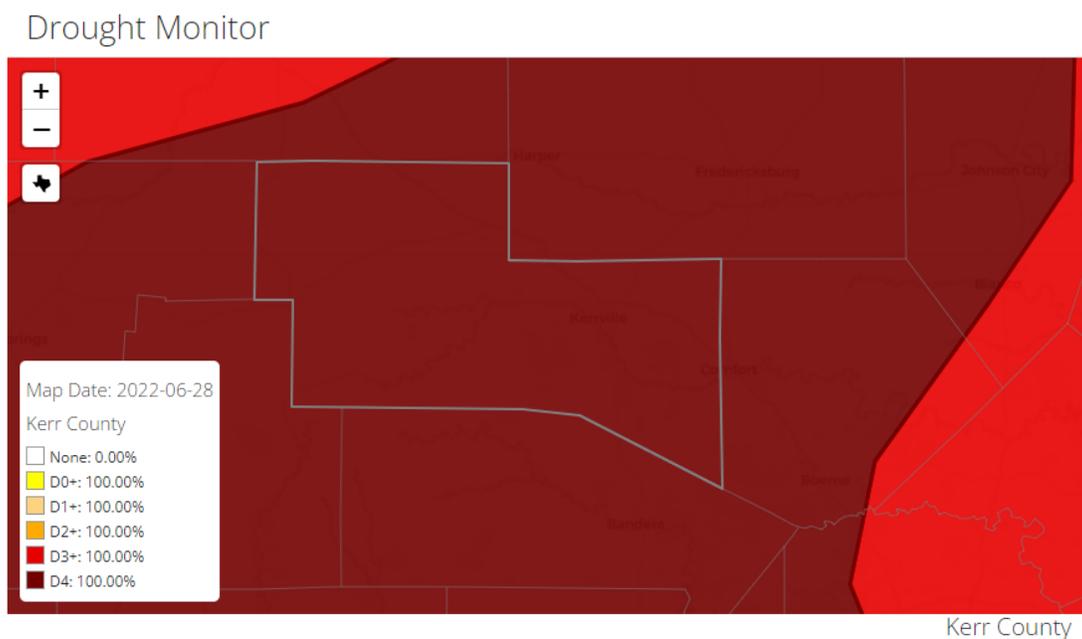
Data source: <https://www.ars.usda.gov/plains-area/kerrville-tx/knipling-bushland-us-livestock-insects-research-laboratory/docs/current-weather-data/>

Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District is responding to these conditions by initiating Stage 3 Drought Restrictions for all Permitted Well owners, which includes commercial wells, irrigation wells, and all public water system wells. Stage 3-Severe Drought will include the following restrictions:

Irrigation of landscaped areas including parks and golf courses should be limited to the previously designated watering hours between 8:00 PM and 10:00 AM. Watering should be by means of hand-held hoses, hand-held buckets, or drip irrigation only. The use of automatic sprinkler systems and hose-end sprinklers should be prohibited at all times. Athletic fields should abide by the same watering hours; however, they are allowed the use of irrigation systems for watering.

The following water uses are defined as non-essential and will be prohibited while Stage 3-Severe Drought is in effect:

- Washing down any sidewalks, walkways, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts, or other hard-surfaced areas.
- Washing down buildings or structures for purposes other than immediate fire protection.
- Failure to repair a controllable leak(s) within a reasonable period after having been given notice directing the repair of such a leak.
- Pumping of groundwater into ponds, lakes or reservoirs for the purpose of enhancing the appearance of the landscape.
- Washing any motor vehicle, motorbike, boat, trailer or other vehicle other than a public safety vehicle on a premises other than a commercial car wash or service station and not in the immediate interest of public health, safety, and welfare.
- The filling of swimming pools.



Source Material: <https://waterdatafortexas.org/drought>

At this time, Headwaters GCD is encouraging and reminding all the public water system customers, including those in the City of Kerrville, to be mindful of our limited surface water and groundwater resources and to follow the conservation guidelines that are communicated by their public water system operators. Also, it should be noted that some public water systems may have self-initiated Stage 4 restrictions within certain public water systems. For this particular situation, those public water system restrictions have been put in place to ensure the continued operation of those water systems; therefore, their restrictions should be followed as communicated.

Landowners with exempt (private) wells are not required to observe the posted Drought Stage restrictions. However, like with public water system customers, Headwaters GCD is encouraging these well owners to be mindful of the long-extending duration of this drought and the effect it may have on private wells. If the water level in a well drops below the level of the pump and it is not detected quickly, the pump in the well could be permanently damaged and that damage may extend to permanently destroying the well itself. At the very least, there will be a repair cost involved with lowering the pump back down into the water, and depending on the duration of the drought, this may need to happen more than once. For some wells, the pump may already be at its lowest possible point, leaving the well owner with limited and expensive options. To summarize, practicing water conservation throughout this drought will not only benefit our groundwater resources, but may also help prevent unnecessary expenses for the well owner.

Some household water conservation tips include:

- Only running full loads of dishes and laundry.
- Taking short showers instead of baths.
- Fixing leaky pipes, faucets, and toilets.
- Installing water efficient showerheads and aerators.
- Turning the water off and on, as needed, while brushing teeth, shaving, washing face and hands.
- Collect unused running water into recycled plastic bottles and jugs, to be used for drinking water or for indoor/outdoor plant watering.
- Cover pools and spas when not in use, to prevent evaporation.
- If replacing or adding landscaping, choose drought tolerant plants and shrubs.
- Use and re-fresh mulch on flowerbeds or barren soil areas. Mulch helps retain moisture in the soil and reduces the need for watering.

Information about the HGCD Monitor Wells, Drought Information, and other Helpful Information can be found on our website at www.hgcd.org.

Additional conservation information can be found on the following websites:

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

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

Palmer Drought Severity Index:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/regional_monitoring/palmer.gif