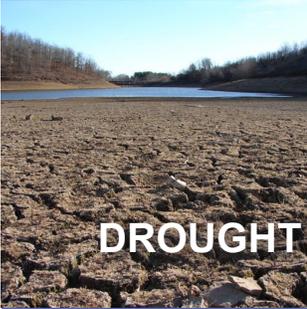


SELF SUFFICIENCY IS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



DROUGHT

DROUGHT FACTS

- The most common droughts are of short duration (6 months or less) with aerial extents that vary with the seasons.
- Multi-year droughts occur infrequently.
- Precipitation data indicate that most weather stations across the state have experienced two or more consecutive years of precipitation less than 80% of average a few times during the 20th century .
- The drought of 2000-2003 in Colorado led to many agencies working together on water conservation. The dryness and lack of precipitation led to the worst wildfire season in Colorado's history in 2002.

WHAT TO DO ...

Drought occurs when a normal amount of moisture is not available to satisfy an area's usual water-consuming activities. It is dry weather that persists long enough to cause serious problems such as crop damage and/or water supply shortages. The severity of the drought depends upon the degree of moisture deficiency, the duration, and the size of the affected area.

COMMON IMPACTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Drought events have the potential to cause significant disruption to the lives of urban water users, who consume an estimated 5 - 7 percent of the water resources in the U.S. Rationing of water usually starts by voluntary limitations on lawn watering, car washing and other discretionary water uses. As supplies grow more limited, these restrictions can become mandatory.

COMMON IMPACTS TO INDUSTRY

Industry is credited with consuming 20 - 22 percent of U.S. water resources. This water use is directly related to jobs and payrolls. The requirement to curtail or shut down industrial production due to water limitations can have devastating effects on a community. In the short term this can result in a loss of payrolls as the water limited plant struggles to maintain its competitive position. In the longer term it may mean the loss of the industry due to uncertainty over the reliability of the water supply.



COMMON IMPACTS TO AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is attributed to using 65 - 75 percent of the available water resources. Impacts on agriculture differ significantly based on the availability of groundwater and the agricultural community's reliance on natural rainfall. Reduced yields commonly reduce payrolls and cause reduced sales levels for the many companies that service the farm industry.

COLORADO DROUGHT HISTORY

Colorado's most dramatic drought periods occurred in the 1930s and 1950s, when many states were affected for several years at a time.

The drought of 1976-77 was essentially a winter event and was not long in duration. However, it was the driest winter in recorded history for much of Colorado's high country and western slope, and had serious consequences for the ski industry.

Since 1981, Colorado has seen a sustained overall wet period. A few localized exceptions include a significant, but brief drought in southwest Colorado from 1989 to 1990; a growing season drought in 1994 in northeast Colorado; and a localized drought in southwest Colorado from late 1995 into 1996. La Niña influenced weather patterns in the winter of 1999, leaving the statewide snowpack abnormally low in the spring. While many parts of the country were experiencing drought conditions, abundant moisture in the second half of 1999 resulted in wet conditions over almost all of Colorado.