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Governor Updates Drought Declarations in Kansas Counties

The Governor's Drought Team examines continued drought conditions as summer temps climb.

Topeka – While there have been some recent rains, drought conditions for many areas of Kansas continue to worsen. Today Governor Jeff Colyer updated the Drought Declaration for Kansas counties with Executive Order 18-16. The update includes all 105 counties either in an emergency, warning or watch status. This order places nearly half of Kansas counties in an emergency drought status.

“Kansans need to know no matter where you live in the state, the drought is not over,” said Governor Jeff Colyer. “I’ve heard many concerns from producers and have seen the conditions first hand. We appreciate our federal partners at the Natural Resources Conservation Service as well as the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts— when we asked them to identify additional sources of assistance they responded quickly to help producers address these extreme drought conditions.”

The updated drought declaration has 50 counties in emergency status, 27 in warning status while 28 counties are in watch status. This action was recommended by Tracy Streeter, Director of the Kansas Water Office (KWO) and Chair of the Governor’s Drought Response Team.

“With reported livestock water shortages, low flows at some of our reservoirs and monthly outlooks favoring persistent drought we know it’s imperative to monitor conditions closely,” said Tracy Streeter. “Some areas of Kansas are behind more than 15 inches in moisture for the year and outlooks favor above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation in July.”

Counties in emergency stage are eligible for emergency use of water from certain state fishing lakes due to the KWO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kansas Department of Wildlife (KDWP). They also become eligible for water in some Federal reservoirs.

Individuals and communities need to contact KWO for a water supply request prior to any withdrawals from lakes. They will in turn be referred to the appropriate office to obtain the necessary permit to withdraw the water.

This Executive Order and any authorized upgrade shall remain in effect for those counties so identified until rescinded by Executive Order or superseded by a subsequent Executive Order revising the drought stage status of the affected counties. Effective immediately:

- Declare a Drought Emergency, Warning or Drought Watch for the counties identified below;
- Authorize and direct all agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor to implement the appropriate watch or warning level-drought response actions assigned in the Operations Plan of the Governor’s Drought Response Team.

The Governor’s Drought Response Team will continue to watch the situation closely and work to minimize the effects the drought has on Kansans.

For more detailed information about current conditions, see the Kansas Climate Summary and Drought Report on the Kansas Water Office website at: www.kwo.ks.gov.

County Drought Stage Declarations:

Drought Emergency: Barber, Barton, Butler, Chase, Clark, Clay, Coffey, Comanche, Cowley, Dickinson, Edwards, Ellsworth, Finney, Ford, Geary, Grant, Gray, Greenwood, Hamilton, Harper, Harvey, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Kingman, Kiowa, Lincoln, Lyon, Marion, McPherson, Meade, Morris, Morton, Osage, Ottawa, Pawnee, Pottawatomie, Pratt, Reno, Rice, Riley, Saline, Sedgwick, Seward, Shawnee, Stafford, Stanton, Stevens, Sumner, Wabaunsee

Drought Warning: Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Brown, Chautauqua, Doniphan, Douglas, Elk, Ellis, Franklin, Greeley, Jackson, Jefferson, Lane, Leavenworth, Montgomery, Nemaha, Neosho, Ness, Rush, Russell, Scott, Trego, Wallace, Wichita, Wilson, Woodson

Drought Watch: Bourbon, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Cloud, Crawford, Decatur, Gove, Graham, Jewell, Johnson, Labette, Linn, Logan, Marshall, Miami, Mitchell, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rawlins, Republic, Rooks, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Thomas, Washington, Wyandotte

Note to Editor: The Americans with Disabilities Act, (42 U.S.C. 12101), requires the Kansas Water Office to print the reasonable accommodations messages.

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As the state’s water office, KWO conducts water planning, policy coordination and water marketing as well as facilitates public input throughout the state.

The agency prepares the KANSAS WATER PLAN, a plan for water resources development, management and conservation.