

popular spot especially during wildflower season,” said Denison TIC supervisor Valerie Followell. “Big Bend is also a region that attracts a lot of interest. San Antonio is a popular spot for our visitors going to the South Texas Plains. And for the sun and water lovers the Gulf Coast, from South Padre Island to Galveston, has a lot to offer. Palo Duro Canyon and the Panhandle Plains are visited by many. The Piney Woods of Texas where you can zipline through the canopies and check out the different ecosystems and wildlife. The Prairies and Lakes feature the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, and Waco that are popular spots to visit.”

Travel Information Centers with unique features like Laredo are also great spots to visit.

“Our TIC in Laredo is on the border with Nuevo Laredo, Mexico,” said Laredo TIC supervisor Juan J. Gonzalez, Jr. “We are two hours north of Monterrey, Mexico, which is the 2nd largest city in Mexico and two hours south of San Antonio. The travel center has a Spanish Hacienda inspired architecture with a beautiful water fountain just outside the main lobby and an enormous Texas bronze statue. The property also includes three ponds and seven gazebos with picnic tables.”

While many drivers rely on GPS to get to their destinations, counselors consider that a common mistake as service may be limited in locations, and they suggest traveling with a paper map. Other mistakes include not planning.

“Failure to check operating hours or instructions for attractions or events, can result in not being able to enter or enjoy a planned stop,” said Harlingen TIC supervisor Sara Van Wyk.

TICs welcome approximately two million visitors each year. Staff share they love for their jobs whether they’ve been advising and guiding travelers for one year or nearly 20.

“My favorite part of working at TxDOT is visiting with the people who visit our center. I love hearing about their journeys and sharing information on places they can’t miss along the way,” said Claire.

Texas is the second largest state in the United States so if a travel center isn’t on your route, make sure you utilize a few of the state’s 76 safety rest areas. The locations feature restrooms that are open 24 hours daily, vending machines, and a place to stay up to 24 hours under Texas Transportation Code 545.411. Travelers may also call 1-800-452-9292 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily for travel information, professional trip planning assistance and road condition information. Automated road conditions are 24 hours a day.

Water Weekly

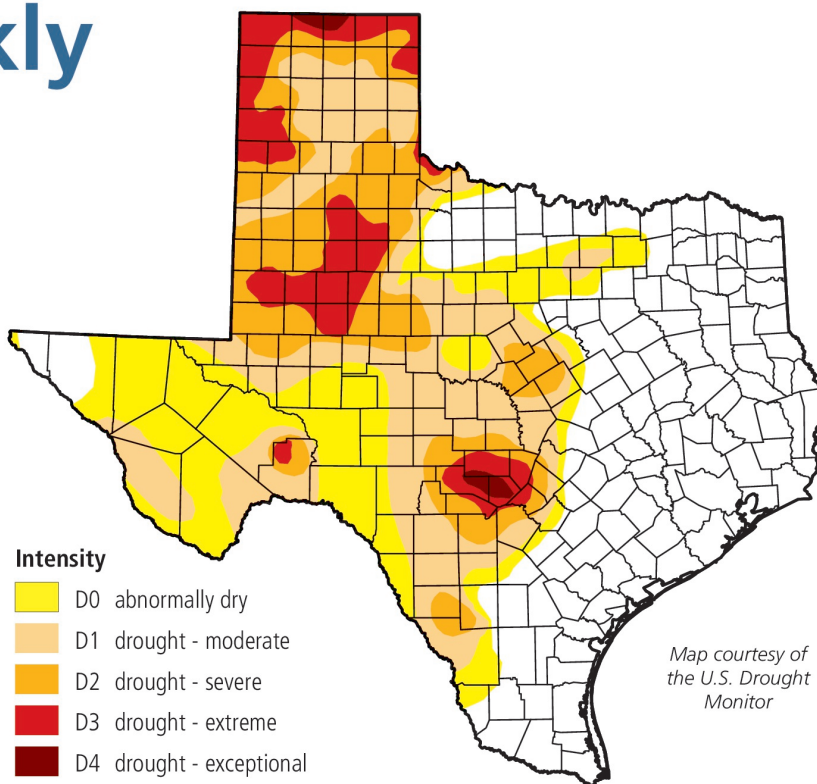
For the week of 05/29/23

Water conditions

Recent precipitation continues to have a positive impact on the drought monitor map. The latest map, for conditions as of May 23, shows the eighth consecutive weekly decrease in the area of the state impacted by drought. Drought area has reached its smallest extent since November 2021.

Drought conditions

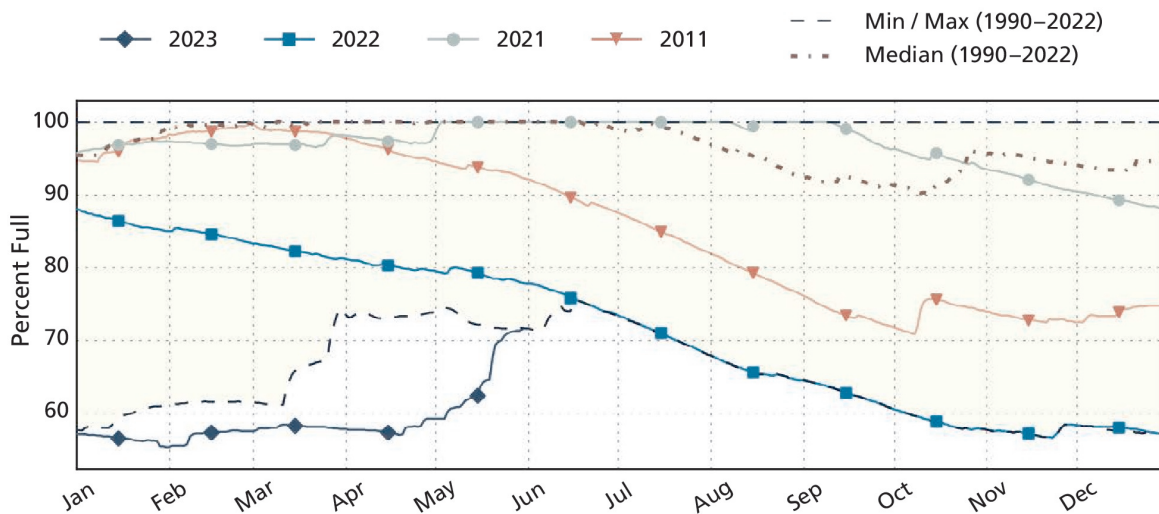
- ◆ 42% now
- ◆ 49% a week ago
- ◆ 58% three months ago
- ◆ 79% a year ago



Waco Lake storage

TWDB chart

Surface water supplies are improving, albeit at different rates across the state. Storage in Waco Lake has increased more than 10 percentage points in May. Lake Limestone (50 miles east of Waco Lake) filled in April, while Proctor Lake (80 miles west) is up only 7 percentage points in May.



Written by Dr. Mark Wentzel — Dr. Mark Wentzel is a hydrologist in the TWDB’s Office of Water Science and Conservation.

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