

Berry's rules for adopting new tools are a modern application of that wise Luddite vision.

I am not anti-technology or anti-internet. Most of my readers will receive these words through the internet. Unless I am willing to handwrite my essays and mail them to each of you, then I should not decry the internet's existence. But dadgummit, the internet is a tool and right now, the tool is using and controlling much of our society. That is a problem. It only benefits the plutocrats and oligarchs who benefit from our distraction and addiction. I believe that the internet can benefit our rural communities in many ways. Towns like Stamford have already received wonderful new residents with remote internet-based jobs. They have made our communities better and that would not have happened without it. But we must focus on the flying cars and not the 140 characters, so to speak.

Television homogenized our culture in unsettling ways. The internet does something different. It encourages us to retreat into a virtual world and behave differently. It puts us on edge, both with ourselves and with one another. That is a worldwide phenomenon, not a specific symptom of rural decline, but it only holds that power and causes that harm if we allow it to do so. The internet is a tool. It is not intrinsically different in that regard than a hammer. We do not let hammers rule our lives and adversely influence our human relationships. We need to place the same expectations around the internet.

We can do certain things to build back our local culture and work to overcome these destructive tendencies. I will talk more about that in the future. But for now, let's ask ourselves on an individual level: will we use the internet to improve our life, or will we let it control us?

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Governor declares September 28, 2024, Hunting and Fishing Day

The story of hunting and fishing is synonymous with the story of Texas itself. Before even the earliest American settlers arrived, the native tribes of Texas were renowned for both activities. Life for settlers on the frontier was arduous, however, and hunting and fishing sustained life as they navigated new territory. Just as the native tribes had done, settlers learned that hunters and fishers are caretakers of the environment, who take only what is necessary. Today, true sportsmen exhibit this same

ethos.

Hunting and fishing offer a variety of individual as well as collective benefits. Being able to provide for yourselves and your loved ones is an innate drive, and to this end, hunting and fishing are unrivaled. These activities also deepen relationships with loved ones and with nature itself, boosting ones mental and emotional wellness. Moreover, there are numerous economic and ecological benefits that these activities provide to a state that prides itself on its robust economy. The hunting of invasive species, for example, is a noble pursuit to protect the natural integrity of the Lone Star State.

In 1972, National Hunting and Fishing Day was established to recognize and celebrate hunters and anglers for their priceless contributions to fish and wildlife conservation as well as to our society. At this time, I encourage all Texans to learn about, participate in, and appreciate the time-honored traditions of hunting and fishing and to celebrate the ecological, cultural, and economic benefits

they provide.

Therefore, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim September 28, 2024, to be Hunting and Fishing Day in Texas and urge all Texans to observe the occasion with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

TAHC requires pre-movement testing for exhibition dairy cattle

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) issued an executive director order declaring intrastate movement restrictions of lactating dairy cattle to fairs, shows, or exhibitions on July 25, 2024. The order places movement restrictions related to highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) on lactating dairy cattle moving intrastate to fairs, shows or exhibitions.

This order is issued in accordance with the Texas Agriculture Code §161.054 and Title 4, Texas Administrative Code §58 and is effective immediately.

This order will remain in effect until 60 days after the last detection of H5N1 in cattle

herds in the United States.

To help mitigate disease spread to poultry and cattle and protect Texas animal health, the following requirements must be met:

Each lactating dairy cow moving intrastate to a fair, show or exhibition must have a negative PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test result for Influenza A virus. The results must be from an individual milk sample collected and tested at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory using a NAHLN approved assay within seven days prior to movement.

These animals may return to their home herd using the same negative test result, if the exhibition or show does not exceed 10 days.

This testing is available to producers at no cost through USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) programs at NAHLN laboratories. Producers may also apply for reimbursement of shipping and veterinary fees for collection of samples. View the USDA APHIS financial support for producers information to

learn more.

The HPAI dairy testing protocol requires:

Sample collection must be performed by a USDA category II accredited veterinarian or a person under the direct supervision of USDA category II accredited veterinarian working for the dairy cattle herd

Milk from each quarter of the individual cow must be pooled together to create a total sample between 3-10 ml of milk.

Each lactating dairy cow's sample must be kept individualized. Samples shall not be pooled between cows.

Prior to interstate movement, lactating dairy cattle are required to receive a negative PCR test for Influenza A virus at an approved NAHLN laboratory using a NAHLN approved assay and in accordance with the federal order effective April 29, 2024.

TAHC reminds producers to follow all federal requirements for interstate movement, check the state of destination and individual event requirements, and stay compliant with current TAHC intrastate requirements when moving lactating dairy cattle.

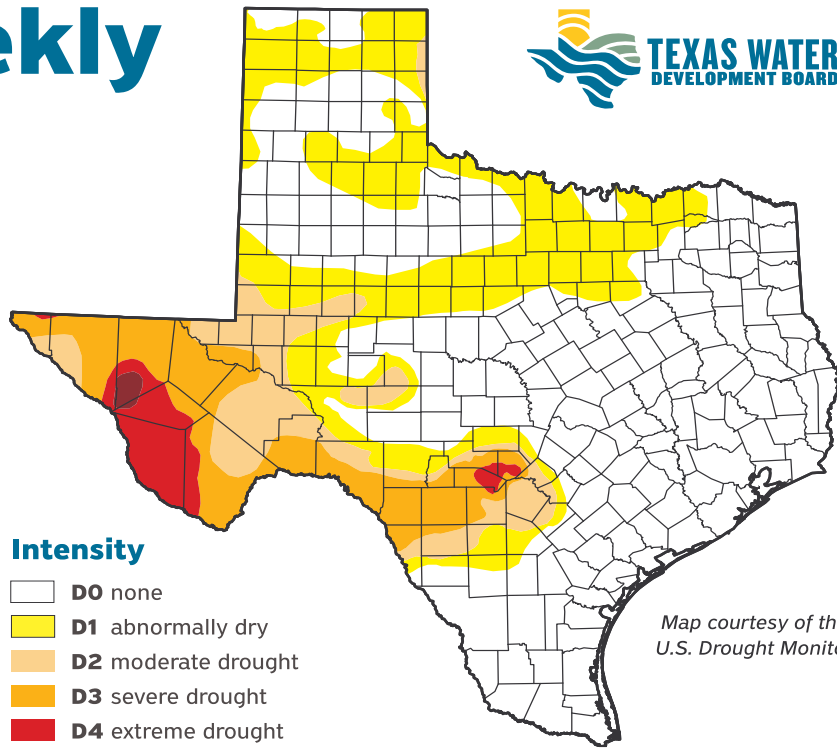
Water Weekly

For the week of 07/29/24



Water conditions

The latest drought map for conditions as of July 23 shows improvement in large areas of Central Texas and scattered areas of both improvement and degradation in the Panhandle and West Texas. Overall, the area of the state impacted by drought fell to its smallest extent since mid-February.



Map courtesy of the U.S. Drought Monitor

Drought conditions

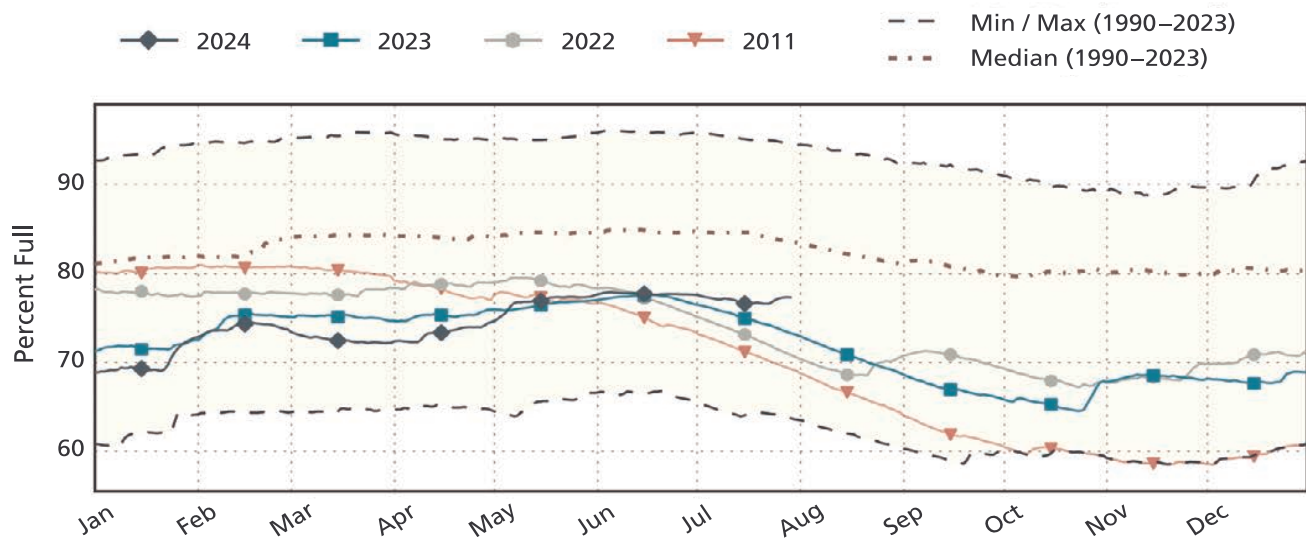
- 21%** now
- 25%** a week ago
- 28%** three months ago
- 49%** a year ago

Intensity

- D0** none
- D1** abnormally dry
- D2** moderate drought
- D3** severe drought
- D4** extreme drought
- D5** exceptional drought

Statewide reservoir storage

Statewide water supply storage usually declines during July. This year, cooler and wetter than normal conditions have allowed us to maintain storage at about 77 percent of capacity. That's four percentage points above last year, but still more than six percentage points lower than normal for this time of year.



TWDB chart

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