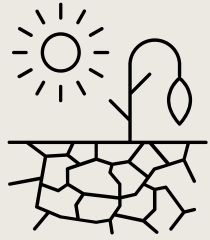


Droughts - long periods without rain, snow or other precipitation - can last for months or even years, impacting the environment, agriculture, and our health.

For information on current conditions in Maine, please visit the [Maine EMA](#), [Maine CDC](#), or [US Drought Monitor](#).



Health Impacts from Droughts

- Reduced access to safe drinking water.
- Increased stagnation and water pollutant concentration.
- Lower water levels (impacting cleaning, sanitation, hand-washing, and hygiene).
- Increased infectious and vector-borne disease risk.
- Increased wildfire risk, which worsens air quality and increases the risk for respiratory infections and asthma complications.

Residents using well water may be more impacted by health harms caused by droughts.

Water conservation measures are critical & should be started early!

During a drought:

- Avoid flushing the toilet after every use.
- Take short showers (<10 minutes) and turn the water on and off while shampooing.
- Run only full dishwasher and laundry loads, and use the short cycle on the machines.
- Utilize grey water: Lightly used water from sources like showers, bathtubs, and bathroom sinks can be collected by placing a bucket in the shower or sink and then used for plant and lawn watering, car washing, and toilet flushing. *Grey water is not safe to drink.*

You can reduce wildfire risk during drought by avoiding fire pits, extinguishing cigarette butts in sand or water before throwing away, clearing dry brush, and avoiding fireworks.

Well Information & Safety

During a drought, spread out water use throughout the day to give the groundwater time to replenish. If your well runs dry, do not pour any additional foreign water into it, as it can damage or contaminate the well. See the [Maine Drought Task Force](#) & [Maine DACE](#) for more information about drought and available assistance.

Regardless of drought status, well water should be tested for contaminants and harmful chemicals every 3-5 years. The [Maine CDC](#) provides free help and testing information to private well owners.