



Spencer J. Cox
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER
2025-04

Declaring a State of Emergency in Certain Counties Due to Drought Conditions

WHEREAS, 13 counties in the state are in extreme or severe drought categories according to the U.S. Drought Monitor (Washington, Iron, San Juan, Kane, Juab, Emery, Grand, Beaver, Garfield, Piute, Millard, Tooele, and Uintah);

WHEREAS, four counties in the state are at risk of drought due to Snow Water Equivalents below 50%, streamflow forecasts below 50%, or being surrounded by counties in severe drought (Carbon, Sevier, Sanpete, and Wayne);

WHEREAS, drought has impacted the southern part of the state 8 of the last 10 years;

WHEREAS, the April peak of snowpack was approximately 44% of normal in southwestern Utah and average winter temperatures were two degrees higher than normal;

WHEREAS, water supply forecasts are below 30% for southwestern Utah;

WHEREAS, these extreme drought conditions have adversely and significantly impacted agribusiness and livestock production, as well as wildlife and natural habitats;

WHEREAS, drought conditions can adversely impact drinking water supplies and increase the number of drinking water emergencies requiring boil orders or Do Not Drink orders;

WHEREAS, increased recreation in dry vegetative conditions has contributed to an increased and prolonged threat of wildfire across the southern part of the state;

WHEREAS, drought conditions that require mitigation are expected to persist and possibly extend to adjacent areas;

WHEREAS, these conditions create a state of emergency under the Disaster Response and Recovery Act found in Title 53, Chapter 2a of the Utah Code;

WHEREAS, Utah Code § 53-2a-204(1)(a) authorizes the governor to utilize all available resources of state government as reasonably necessary to cope with a state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, Utah Code § 53-2a-204(1)(b) authorizes the governor to employ measures and give direction to state and local officers and agencies that are reasonable and necessary for the purpose of securing compliance with orders made pursuant to the Disaster Response and Recovery Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Spencer J. Cox, Governor of the State of Utah, declare a state of emergency due to the aforesaid circumstances in the counties listed above and hereby order the following:

1. The state Emergency Operations Plan is activated.
2. The state Drought Response Committee shall:
 - a. review hardships and other circumstances caused by the drought;
 - b. identify and recommend action to meet those needs; and
 - c. ensure inter-agency coordination in addressing those needs.
3. State agency requirements:
 - a. follow current requirements as outlined in Executive Order 2023-07; and
 - b. as required in Utah Code § 63-5b-1108(5)(a), follow the Division of Water Resources' weekly watering guide: <https://conserwater.utah.gov/weekly-lawn-watering-guide/>; and

I further make the following recommendations:

1. Water suppliers and irrigation companies should:
 - a. encourage efficient landscape watering; and
 - b. as needed, contact the Division of Water Resources for assistance with developing a local drought response plan.
2. Impacted cities and counties should consider developing and implementing water restriction plans and take other steps to promote water conservation for the upcoming irrigation season in order to protect drinking water supplies

3. Residents should:

- a. reduce outdoor water use and waste;
- b. fix irrigation leak and inefficiencies;
- c. convert unnecessary turf areas to waterwise landscapes with drip irrigation;
- d. consider purchasing a smart-timer controller or low flow toilet (rebates are offered at utahwatersavers.com); and
- e. reduce indoor water use by fixing leaks.

THIS ORDER is effective immediately and shall remain in effect for 30 days, unless the Legislature extends the state of emergency.



ATTEST:

IN WITNESS, WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Utah. Done on this, the 24th day of April, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Spencer J. Cox'.

Spencer J. Cox
Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deidre M. Henderson'.

Deidre M. Henderson
Lieutenant Governor