



News Release

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ICPRB Joins Regional Partners in Drought Watch Declaration

Low river flow and very little rain in the forecast has prompted regional organizations to ask residents of the DC Metro area to voluntarily conserve water.

Rockville, MD (July 29, 2024) - The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) joins their regional partners in asking residents and businesses to voluntarily reduce their water use due to the area's dry conditions.

On July 26, 2024, the Drought Coordination Committee of the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) declared a Drought Watch which calls for voluntary water conservation measures for residents of the DC Metropolitan region. This is the second level in COG's four-stage [regional drought response plan](#).

"Our region's 'water supply bank account'-system of reservoirs is full, and we are able to meet the current water needs of the region. This next step will help ensure that remains the case," states ICPRB's executive director, Michael Nardolilli.

ICPRB's Section for Cooperative Water Supply Operations on the Potomac (CO-OP) continues [Drought Monitoring](#) by providing a daily report with weather forecast, river flow data, and regional water demand. This information is shared across social media platforms using #droughtmonitoring. They will continue to do so until conditions improve. If flows in the Potomac River continue to drop, they may reach a level that triggers CO-OP Drought Operations, which includes twice daily reports and may require releases from upstream drinking water reservoirs if forecasted flow in the river is not sufficient to meet expected needs.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, almost 70% of the Potomac River watershed is in either Severe or Extreme drought status.

Nardolilli recommends some options to reduce water use:

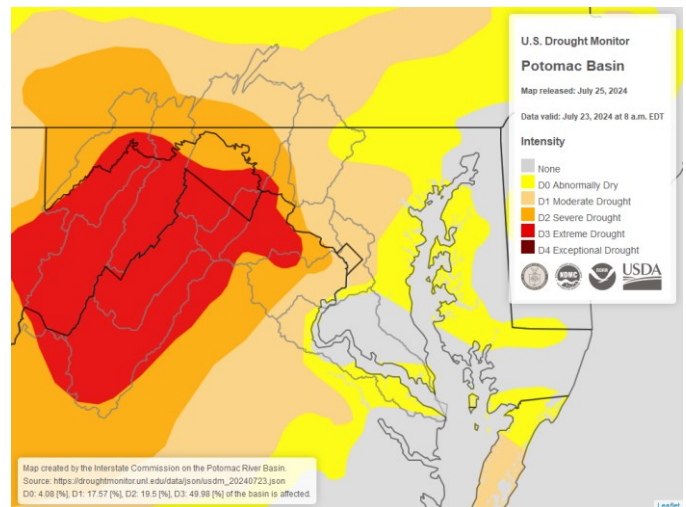
- Prioritize your outdoor watering. Only water newly planted trees, shrubs, and lawns. A slow drip (versus a heavy pour) will allow the water to reach the root system and not run off the soil.
- Check faucets and toilets for leaks.
- Take short showers instead of baths.
- Run the dishwasher and laundry only when full.

Reducing water use will help protect the area's water supply as well as the aquatic ecosystems of local rivers and streams.

"While nearly 6 million people rely on the Potomac River for drinking water, we can work together as one to reduce our water use and protect this valuable resource," says Nardolilli.

Find more [Water Conservation Tips for the Summer](#) on COG's website.

The ICPRB is an interstate compact commission established by Congress in 1940. Its mission is to protect and enhance the waters and related resources of the Potomac River basin through science, regional cooperation, and education. Represented by appointed commissioners, ICPRB includes the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the federal government. ICPRB affirms the importance of fostering diversity equity, inclusion, and justice in all activities. The Potomac belongs to all.



U.S. Drought Monitor for the Potomac River Watershed (gray line) as of 7/23/2024.