



## Groundwater Conservation District Reduces Drought Stage to D-2 Severe Drought, Urges Continued Water Conservation

*For Immediate Release: Thursday, July 2, 2026*

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The Southwestern Travis County Groundwater Conservation District has lowered its drought stage from D-3 Extreme Drought to D-2 Severe Drought, effective immediately, following sustained improvement in drought conditions across the District. Although conditions have improved since the District declared D-3 Extreme Drought on February 19, 2026, drought remains widespread throughout the District and groundwater levels continue to decline across much of the District. Continued water conservation is critical to protecting groundwater resources and supporting aquifer recovery.

With the return to D-2, the District has resumed accepting applications for new non-exempt wells and new operating permits. In addition, Board authorization is no longer required for groundwater production under approved Test Well General Permits. These activities remain subject to all applicable District Rules and permitting requirements.

Under District Rules, the Board may declare a lower drought stage when a majority of the District has remained at a lower drought intensity for at least four consecutive weeks and determines that conditions warrant the declaration. At its June 18, 2026, meeting, the Board directed staff to implement the reduction to D-2 once the required four-week threshold was met, emphasizing the importance of responding promptly to improving conditions while continuing to protect groundwater resources.

According to the most recent U.S. Drought Monitor map released July 2, 2026 (map date June 30, 2026), 85% of the District is classified as Moderate Drought (D-1) and the remaining 15% as Abnormally Dry (D-0). This marks the fourth consecutive week that more than half of the District has been classified at or below Severe Drought (D-2), following more than four months during which a majority of the District was classified as Extreme Drought (D-3).

### **Current Drought Restrictions and Groundwater Use Reductions**

Effective Immediately

- **Exempt Wells, Limited Production General Permits, Non-exempt Domestic Use General Permits:**  
20% voluntary reduction in groundwater use
- **Test Well General Permits:**  
Board authorization is no longer required for groundwater production under approved permits.

- **Operating Permits:**  
20% mandatory reduction of the quarterly permitted volume

District permittees must continue to follow the monthly drought allocations and response measures in their approved User Drought Conservation Plan (UDCP). End-user customers served by groundwater-based utilities must comply with their utility's water-use restrictions.

### **Recommended Water Conservation Measures**

Residents and permittees are encouraged to continue or increase voluntary conservation by:

- Checking for and promptly repairing plumbing leaks.
- Watering lawns, trees, and shrubs no more than once per week.
- Watering only between 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM to minimize evaporative loss.
- Keeping swimming pools, landscape or decorative ponds, and fountains covered whenever possible, using water recirculation systems, and avoiding refills (topping off only).
- Washing vehicles at commercial car washes only when necessary.
- Avoiding washing buildings, driveways, streets, patios, or other outdoor surfaces unless required for health, safety, or fire prevention.
- Using leak-proof troughs for livestock watering whenever possible.
- Not maintaining more than 50,000 gallons of groundwater in ponds, lakes, tanks, or other surface impoundments except for livestock watering and wells specifically designated for firefighting.

### **Helpful Resources**

- District Drought Management: <https://swtcgcd.com/drought-management>
- District Interactive Map: <https://swtcgcd.com/district-map>
- Texas Water Development Board Drought Dashboard: <https://www.waterdatafortexas.org/drought>
- LCRA Municipal Water Use Restrictions (for residents served by utilities that purchase water from LCRA): <https://www.lcra.org/water/permits-contracts/water-supply-contracts/water-use-restrictions/>








The District will continue to monitor aquifer conditions, drought indicators, and weather patterns and will adjust its drought response as conditions warrant.

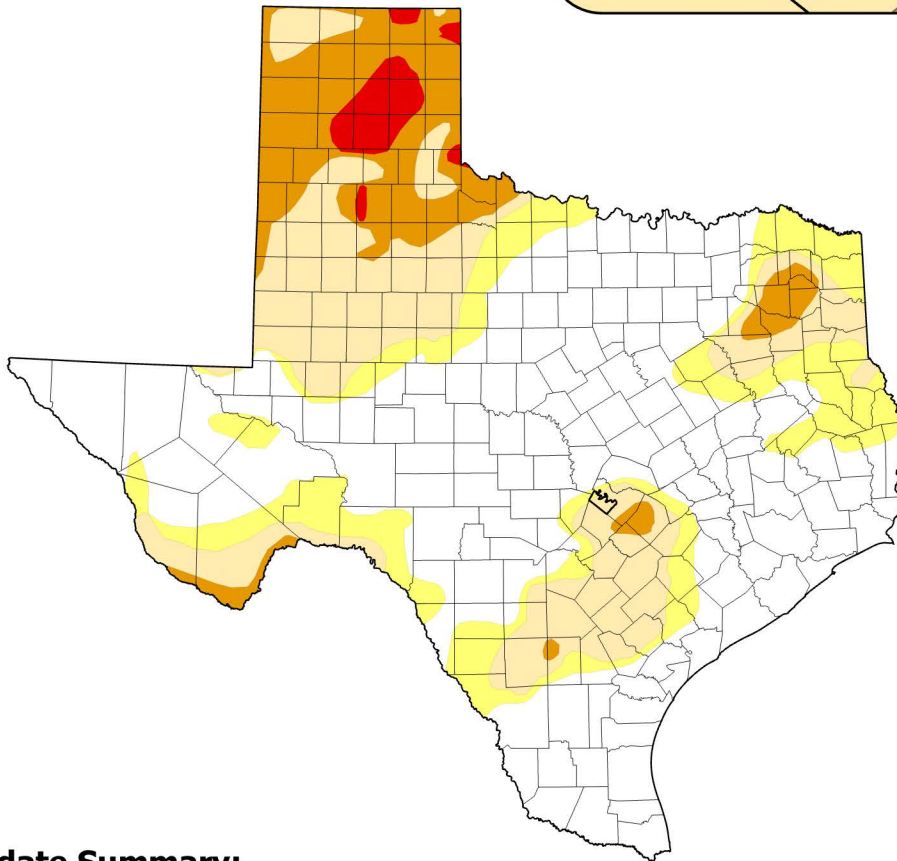
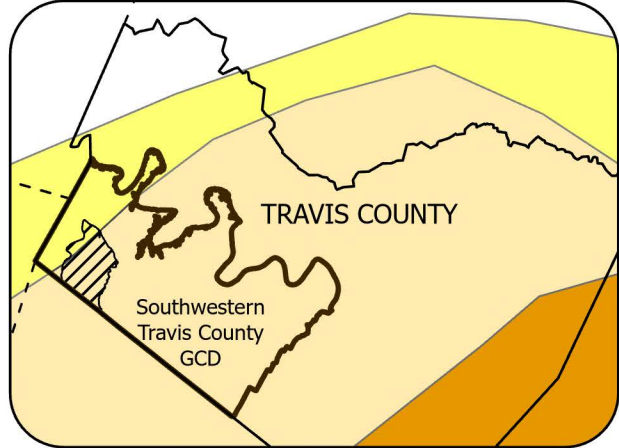
*The Southwestern Travis County Groundwater Conservation District is a groundwater conservation district established by the Texas Legislature to preserve, conserve, and protect the aquifers and groundwater resources within its jurisdiction. The District is governed by a seven-member elected Board of Directors and operates with a small, dedicated team of hydrogeologists, regulatory compliance professionals, and administrative staff.*



## Current Declared Stage: D2 Severe Drought Drought Update – July 2, 2026

**SWTCGCD % at or above each drought stage.**

-  **Hamilton Pool Management Zone**
-  **D0+ Abnormally Dry: 100%**
-  **D1+ Moderate Drought: 85%**
-  **D2+ Severe Drought: 0%**
-  **D3+ Extreme Drought: 0%**
-  **D4 Exceptional Drought 0%**
-  **None: 0%**



### **Drought Update Summary:**

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor map released July 2, 2026 (map date: June 30, 2026), 85% of the District is classified as Moderate Drought (D1) and the remaining 15% as Abnormally Dry (D0). This marks the fourth consecutive week that more than half of the District has been classified at or below D2 Severe Drought, following more than four months during which a majority of the District was classified as D3 Extreme Drought. In accordance with District Rules, the District has reduced its drought stage from D3 Extreme Drought to D2 Severe Drought, effective July 2, 2026. <https://swtcgcd.com/district-map>

### **Drought Thresholds:**

Under District Rule 5.2, at least 50% of the District must be at a higher drought intensity for two consecutive weeks to declare a higher stage. To lower the stage, the reduced intensity must cover at least 50% of the District for four consecutive weeks. The Board may also consider other relevant factors when declaring drought stages.