TRINITY GLEN ROSE GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

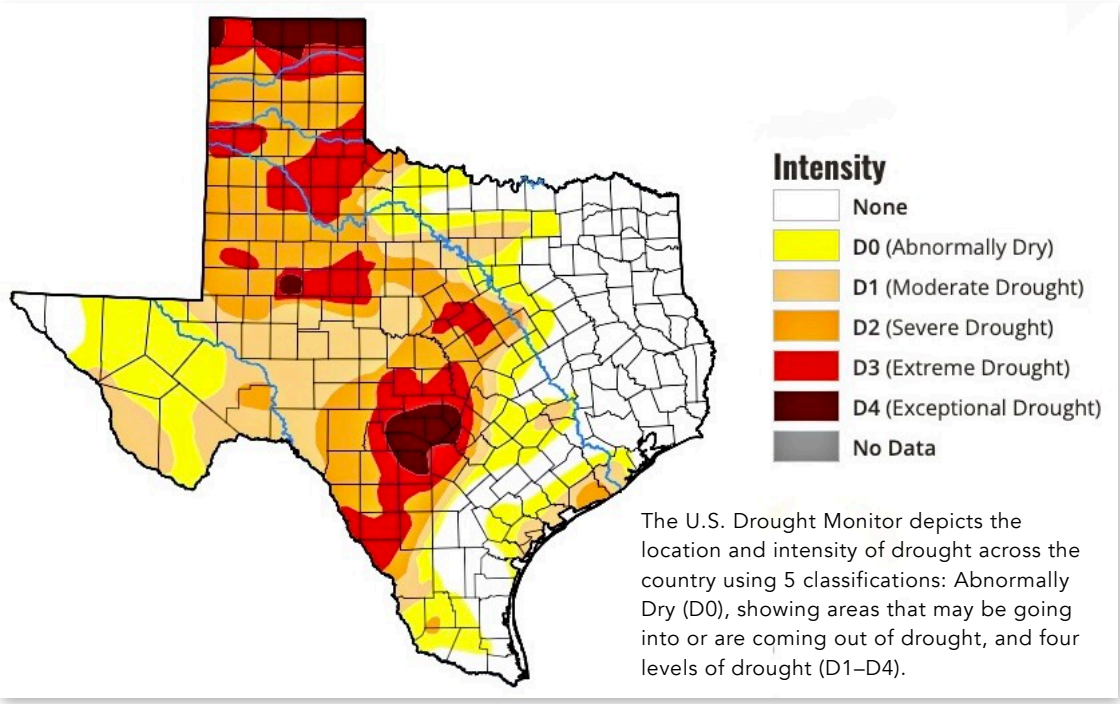
RESOURCE

A newsletter published by the Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District

www.TrinityGlenRose.com | May 2023 | Protect - Conserve - Preserve

Recent Rains Bring Some Drought Relief but....

After more than a year of being in the D4 Exceptional Drought rating, Bexar County has finally moved back to the Extreme Drought category. And, the U.S. Drought Monitor is projecting some continued rain chances over the near term.



The U.S. Drought Monitor depicts the location and intensity of drought across the country using 5 classifications: Abnormally Dry (D0), showing areas that may be going into or are coming out of drought, and four levels of drought (D1–D4).

"The rain we've recently received has been long awaited and very much welcomed," said TGR General Manager George Wissmann. "Some good news to report is that some of the monitoring wells we use in managing the the Trinity Aquifer in the district have shown some improvements with the precipitation. The downside that we still need to be vigilant of is that aquifer levels dropped to some very low levels over the past two years of drought. Some scientists in the region have stated that you need to look back to the 1996 drought or even the drought of the 1950s to find comparable aquifer levels at this time of the year. So we are still in an uphill climb to regain the average aquifer levels we typically see in spring."

According to U.S. Drought Monitor statistics, this has been the 46th wettest March for Bexar County over the last 129 years. However, year to date, this has also been the 46th driest period in those same 129 years. Across the State of Texas, there are 143 counties with USDA drought designations affecting approximately 7.4 million people.

So now that you know the up-to-date facts about the slightly decreasing drought conditions, what can you do to help the community? First, make the rainfall last for a while. In other words, if you have an automatic sprinkler system, turn it off. There were still many reports of systems running in the rain this week, and that is a complete waste of water. With the ground fairly saturated with moisture, there should be no need for watering for two weeks. Turf grass should look nice and healthy over that period.

And remember, there is still more rain projected for the area in the coming weeks, so we all might be able to extend that no watering of landscapes to a month or so.

Now is also a great time of year to begin changing out high water use turf areas in your yard to more water-saving native plant sections. As you do, remember to cap any sprinkler heads that might have been used to water the grass since native plants require no water once they've been established. There are many resources out there that can help you learn how to do that. In fact, just read the next article about the TGR-sponsored Go Gardening show.

How to Choose and Use the Right Fertilizer for Your Yard this Spring

With the advent of the growing season in South Texas, it is the right time to fertilize your potted plants and yard. There are lots to choose from so, **Go Gardening** invited Mark Peterson, a well-known horticulture expert in San Antonio, to walk us through the most eco-friendly types of fertilizers to apply and how much of them to use. This 10 minutes with Mark will clear up lots of questions about those numbers you find on packaging and the differences between organic and inorganic products. Then, we headed out to the newly-opened Nectar Bar to speak with its owner Drake White. Drake's complete focus for this new plant nursery is native plants. In this segment, you'll get some great ideas on natives to use in full sun and shade. But, just as important, you'll also learn about nonnative plants which are sometimes referred to as "invasives." There is one very prevalent nonnative plant we talked about and how its berries are actually poisonous. Do you have these in your yard? The idea here is that you should be removing invasive plants and replacing them with natives.

Go Gardening is produced by the Trinity Glen Rose District and Gardening Volunteers of South Texas to focus on the importance of saving water through best practice landscape maintenance and design. You can watch the new Go Gardening episode at the Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater website or the Gardening Volunteers website.

tgr tips

Did you know…

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, a two-inch rain storm will drop more than 27,000 gallons of water on one acre of land. You can check the USGS rainfall calculator to see how much water your yard can get in a rain storm.