



PANHANDLE WATER NEWS

Conserving Water For Future Generations

PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

APRIL 2024

98% OF OPERATORS ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DISTRICT'S PRODUCTION RULE

In December of 2018, PGCD Board of Directors changed the implementation of the 1 acre-foot per acre per year to require all permitted wells producing more than 35 gallons per minute to be metered and to certify contiguous acreage.

This became the District's new Operating Permit process. In 2019, the District worked with operators across its eight counties to get these Operating Permits in place. The District was considerate, fair, and impartial to all permittees by giving time to meter wells and allowing production to be calculated on a four-year average, which allowed every operator to be measured in the same period with the same metering and permitting criteria.

2023 marked the end of the first 4-year reporting period. District Staff recently completed its evaluation of the 4-year average and is proud to announce that 98% of operators are in compliance with the 1 acre-foot rule. The District would like to congratulate operators on their efforts to conserve our groundwater.

District General Manager, Britney Britten is pleased with the results and looks forward to continuing to work with water users. She said, "PGCD Board has set a reasonable and impartial policy that holds all operating permit holders accountable. One of the great successes of this new permitting system is working with individual operators. I know our Staff and Board have learned a lot through this process. The data collected from these meters, not only helps the Board make well-informed decisions, but it also helps us better educate all water users."

The 1 acre-foot rule was adopted in 2004 by District Board Members. The production rule is one piece of the puzzle that ensures the District is meeting its Desired Future Condition of 50% of groundwater remaining in 50 years. The District is committed to conserving water for future generations.

For more information, questions, or concerns, please contact:
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Newsletter At A Glance

2024 Water Conservation
Symposium

Master Irrigators

Weather Outlook

Education Update

PGCD HOSTS THE 7TH BIENNIAL WATER CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM

On February 28th, PGCD hosted the 7th Biennial Water Conservation Symposium. The District decided to move forward with the symposium despite the wildfires that ravaged the area. At the time of the symposium, the devastation was largely unknown, however, our thoughts and prayers were with the many affected individuals. While the wildfires affected attendance, there were still 250 attendees throughout the day's event. Attendees had the chance to listen to 13 speakers on several different water-related topics and also had the opportunity to network with many of the event sponsors.



Speaker Topics Included:

- Thinking Beyond the Next Drought
- Development of the Ogallala Aquifer : Past, Present and Future
- Panel Discussion on the Importance of Playa Lakes
- Texas Water Development Board Agency Update
- Overview of the 88th Legislative Session and Interim Priorities
- Private Well Owner 101
- Texas Water Future & Policy Trends
- Precipitation Enhancement Programs in Texas
- Drought Management Tool for Irrigated Agricultural Producers
- Amarillo Water: Reflecting On Our Past & Charting Our Future
- Climate Outlook for Spring 2024

[The Next Water Symposium Will Be In 2026](#)

TWO DISTRICT IRRIGATORS PARTICIPATED IN THE 2024 MASTER IRRIGATOR PROGRAM

PGCD sponsored two area irrigators, Trevor Friemel and Leland Gable, for the 2024 Master Irrigator Program, hosted by North Plains Groundwater Conservation District. The Master Irrigator Program is an irrigation management curriculum made up of 32 hours of intensive irrigation education conducted over four one-day sessions to show producers how to maximize advanced conservation irrigation management and conservation practices that work together to save water, conserve energy, build soil health and enhance farm profitability.

Thank you to North Plains Groundwater Conservation District for hosting this great program.



SPRING - SUMMER WEATHER OUTLOOK

Written By: Corey Clay - PGCD Meteorologist

The District finally saw an end to La Niña last year as it transitioned to a neutral phase and then to El Niño by July.

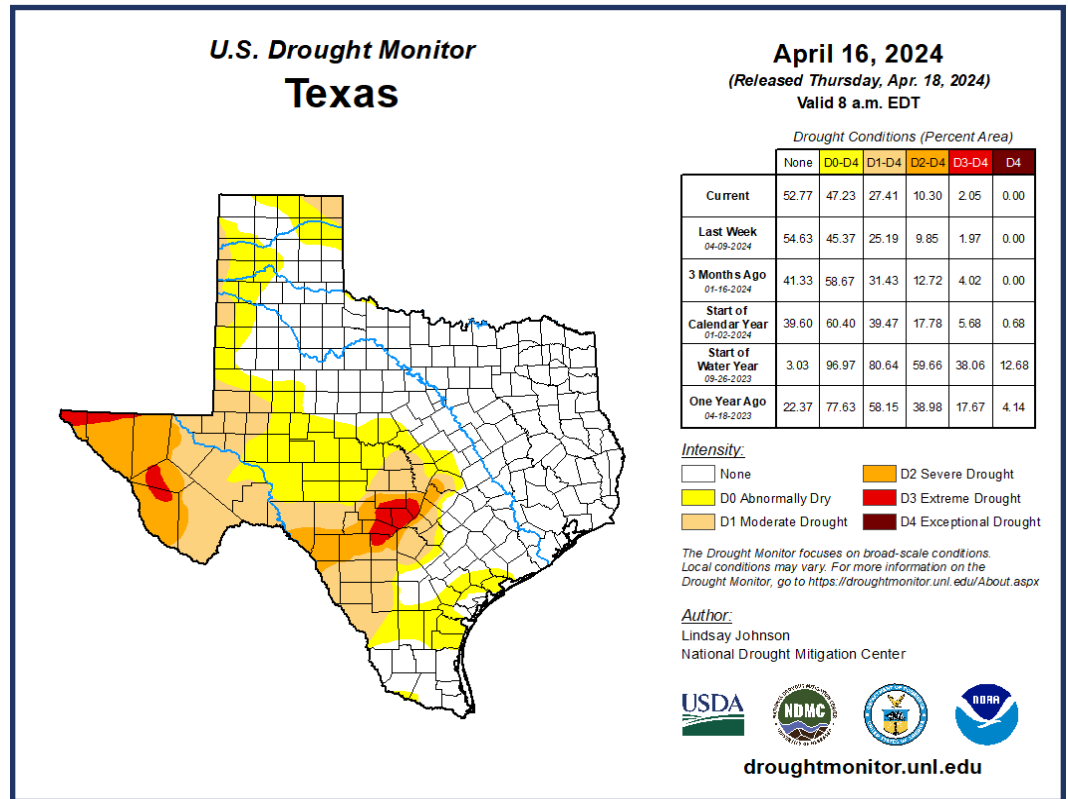
Typically, El Niño brings cool and wet conditions to the southern states with warm and dry conditions to the north. By the winter, the Panhandle started to feel the effects of El Niño as above precipitation occurred from December-February.

Unfortunately, for the Panhandle, it appears that a switch back to La Niña is looming with the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) forecasting a return to neutral by as early as this month with a 55% chance of La Niña by June and lasting through the winter. This is unwelcome news as the heat and dry weather that we saw just a couple of years before could return. The three-month CPC outlook indicates above average temperatures with below normal precipitation through June.

Looking at the most recent La Niña event (2020-2022), June - September months for Amarillo all recorded below average precipitation except for August 2022. Temperatures were also above average over 50% of the time with July and August seeing the greatest spread. This is typical during La Niña as the jet stream stays to the north and subsidence dominates our weather.

However, it is important to note that ENSO (La Niña, El Niño, neutral) events have the most impact during the winter months with less impact during the summers, but recent ENSO events can give us an idea of what we can expect.

Other La Niña years in recent past include 2011, 2012, and 2018. All three years saw below average precipitation totals with 2011 being one of the hottest summers on record. Overall, another hot and dry year is expected for the Panhandle with drought conditions likely returning.



PGCD began its 24th precipitation enhancement season on April 1st.
As always, information regarding this program can be found at
www.pgcd.us/precipitation-enhancement

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **May 2: Board of Directors Meeting**

PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER
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PGCD EDUCATION UPDATE

Even with the school year beginning to wind down, PGCD has been busy with educational field trips visiting the District Office. Classes as young as Kindergarten up to the 5th Grade had the opportunity to learn about where their water comes from, as well as what they can do in their daily routines to help save water at home.

District staff kept the students engaged by using fun games and activities to teach them about various water topics. Some of these activities include water cycle bingo and relay races to put their knowledge of the water cycle to the test. Each student also receives an activity book filled with coloring pages and water facts.



Here are the latest classes that have visited PGCD
Shamrock Elementary - 5th Grade
Bushland Elementary - 2nd Grade
Highland Park Elementary - Kindergarten

To schedule a visit please contact the District Office