

National Drought Summary for April 14, 2026

Summary

Much of the country continued to experience above-normal temperatures in April. During the last week, the warmest temperatures were over the southern Midwest and into the central Plains, where departures were 9°F or greater. California and portions of the Southeast into the Mid-Atlantic were near normal to slightly below normal. Dryness has continued in the Southeast, portions of the South, the Northeast, and much of the High Plains. The greatest precipitation occurred in the Great Basin, northern California, central and west Texas, northeast Kansas, and across much of Michigan and Wisconsin, where spring thunderstorms developed within an active weather pattern, mainly over the Midwest.

Northeast

Temperatures were mixed across the region this week. Western areas were 2–4 degrees above normal, with some pockets of greater departures in New York and Pennsylvania. Coastal areas were near normal to slightly below normal. Northern New England was the wettest part of the region, with portions of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine recording 100–150% of normal precipitation for the week. Farther south, precipitation decreased, with mostly dry conditions in southern New Jersey, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Moderate drought expanded across most of southern New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, and northern Delaware. In Virginia, moderate and severe drought expanded, with severe drought pushing north into southern Maryland. In West Virginia, abnormally dry conditions expanded across much of the state, while moderate drought expanded across southern and eastern areas. In northern Vermont, New Hampshire, and far northwest Maine—areas that received the most precipitation—abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions improved. Similar improvements were observed in far eastern Massachusetts.

Southeast

Much of the region was near normal to slightly below normal for temperatures this week. The western portion was the exception, with temperatures 3–6 degrees above normal. The coolest readings were along Florida's Atlantic coast, where several rain events helped reduce temperatures. Outside of Florida, the region remained dry, with most areas recording little to no precipitation this week.

Coastal eastern Florida and much of southern Florida recorded above-normal precipitation, with some localized areas exceeding 6 inches. Continued dryness across the region led to widespread degradation in drought conditions. Nearly the entire state of Alabama experienced a one-category worsening, with extreme drought spreading across the southeast and severe drought affecting much of the state.

In Georgia, exceptional drought expanded eastward, while extreme drought in northern areas shifted slightly south. Across the Carolinas, severe drought spread across much of eastern South Carolina, with extreme drought expanding in the far southeast. Extreme drought also expanded along the North Carolina–South Carolina border and in western and northeastern North Carolina. Florida received enough rainfall to prevent degradation this week, despite below-normal precipitation in some areas. Improvements were observed along the Atlantic coast and in parts of central Florida.

Midwest

An active weather pattern brought significant rainfall to many areas, while locations outside the storm track remained mostly dry. Areas from western Missouri into southern Iowa, Wisconsin, northern Illinois, and northern Michigan recorded 200–400% of normal precipitation for the week. In contrast, areas from southeast Missouri to central Illinois and into Ohio and Kentucky received less than 25% of normal precipitation. Northern Iowa and northern Minnesota were also drier than normal.

Temperatures were above normal across most of the region, with only northern Michigan and Minnesota near or slightly below normal. Parts of Illinois, Missouri, and western Indiana were 9–12 degrees above normal. Dry and warm conditions allowed abnormally dry conditions to expand across southern Indiana and northern Kentucky. Moderate drought expanded across much of eastern and northern Kentucky, while extreme drought expanded over the “bootheel” of Missouri and into far western Kentucky.

In northern Missouri, eastern Illinois, and southern and western Iowa, abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions improved this week, supported by short-term indicators.

High Plains

Temperatures were mostly above normal, with only eastern North Dakota and northeast South Dakota near or below normal. The greatest departures occurred in central Kansas, where temperatures were 12–15 degrees above normal. Above-normal precipitation was observed in southwest and northern North Dakota.

Kansas experienced the most active weather, with southwest and eastern areas of the state and southeast Nebraska recording above-normal precipitation. Some areas of northeast Kansas received more than 400% of normal precipitation. These rains led to improvements in abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions across southeast Nebraska and northeast Kansas. Some areas of eastern Nebraska and south-central Kansas also saw improvements.

Extreme drought expanded across southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas, while severe drought expanded across southwest Kansas. The plains of eastern Colorado experienced nearly a full-category degradation, with expansion of moderate, severe, and extreme drought.

South

Precipitation was mixed across the region. Oklahoma and much of central and western Texas received more than 150% of normal precipitation. Farther east, eastern Arkansas and Louisiana saw light precipitation, while areas farther west and into Tennessee remained mostly dry.

Temperatures were above normal across much of the region, with only southern Texas, southern Louisiana, and eastern Mississippi near or below normal. The greatest departures occurred in western Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle, where temperatures were 12–15 degrees above normal.

Drought expanded and intensified across much of Tennessee, with moderate and severe drought expanding statewide and a new area of extreme drought developing in the northwest. In Mississippi, moderate and severe drought expanded across eastern and southern areas, with extreme drought expanding in the northwest. Arkansas remained dry, with extreme and exceptional drought expanding in both northern and southern areas.

Louisiana saw expansion of extreme drought across much of the south, as well as central and northern areas. Moderate and severe drought also expanded across southern portions of the state. Oklahoma remained largely unchanged, with only minor expansion of severe drought in the panhandle.

The most significant improvements occurred in Texas, where much of central, southern, and southeastern portions of the state saw a full-category improvement in drought conditions. However, severe drought expanded in parts of the panhandle.

West

Warmer-than-normal temperatures dominated the region this past week. Departures were 6–8 degrees above normal across most of Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. Only the Sierra Nevada area and northern California were near to slightly below normal.

Precipitation was mixed, with parts of northern California, northern Nevada, eastern Oregon, southern Utah, eastern and western New Mexico, southwest Idaho, and eastern Washington receiving above-normal precipitation.

The lack of snowpack will continue to impact the region in the coming months. Earlier-than-normal snowmelt, below-normal seasonal totals, and increased liquid precipitation are contributing to hydrological impacts.

Changes this week included improvements in moderate drought in northeastern California and expansion of moderate and severe drought in southern Arizona. Southern Idaho into northern Nevada saw expansion of severe, extreme, and exceptional drought, while severe drought expanded across eastern and northern New Mexico.

Caribbean

No changes occurred in Puerto Rico this week.

Until the end of the period, it had been a relatively dry week across the U.S. Virgin Islands, with a few tenths of an inch of rain falling on most locations. Some locations may have been teetering on the brink of short-term dryness, but moderate to heavy rain fell on most of the region late in the week. Most locations reported 1.0 to 2.5 inches of rain in the last 24-48 hours, although parts of St. Croix received a little less than an inch. Still, these amounts pushed April to date totals to near or above normal, and with no antecedent dryness noted, this is enough to preclude any dryness or drought designation at this time.

Pacific

No changes occurred in Alaska this week.

Hawaii, recent wetter conditions allowed for additional reduction of abnormally dry conditions in central areas of the Big Island.

Heavy to excessive precipitation during the past few months was exacerbated by Super Typhoon Sinlaku, which tracked slowly across the Marianas into April 15. The center moved across the northern Marianas near Saipan, but wind gusts topped hurricane force throughout the island chain. Saipan reported wind gusts reaching 130 mph while

Guam – well south of the center – recorded an 87 mph wind gust. Rainfall was intense, especially across the southern reaches of the island near Guam, which reported amounts of over one foot through mid-afternoon April 15. Saipan reported 5.73 inches through April 14, with the storm in progress. These amounts pushed March 1 – April 15 totals to near or above the record for the period. Guam recorded 28.46 inches during these 1.5 months (the normal is 4.36 inches) and Saipan measured 20.59 inches (normal 3.15 inches). Saipan reported 41.46 inches for the year to date (normal 9.30 inches) and Guam has received over 50 inches of rain since December 2025 (normal under 20 inches). It may go without saying that no dryness or drought is noted anywhere across the Marianas, and there is little chance of any developing in the near future.

In Palau, April is off to a dry start, with April 1-13 totals at Koror totaling just over one-half inch (two days of reports were missing). The prior couple of months, however, were at least somewhat wetter than normal, with February bringing almost 11 inches and March bringing slightly more. These amounts were more than sufficient to keep up with water demand, so no dryness or drought is indicated this week, but the situation will need to be monitored if April continues to be very dry.

April is also off to a very dry start in western sections of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Less than one-half inch fell on Yap through the 13th (just 15 percent of normal) and under 0.9 inch was recorded in Ulithi (under 40 percent of normal). However, the first three months of the year were near or wetter than normal, so no impactful dryness or drought is noted at this time. Yap reported over 10.5 inches of rain in January (145 percent of normal), followed by 6.71 inches in February (112 percent of normal) and 6.92 inches in March (over 130 percent of normal).

In the central FSM from Chuuk southward to Kapingamarangi, Lukunor remains abnormally dry this week (D0) while no dryness or drought is noted elsewhere. Lukunor recorded 60 to 75 percent of normal for each of the first three months of 2026, and so far this April, 3.58 inches has been reported, or just under 70 percent of normal. Year-to-date, Lukunor reports 22.37 inches of rain, compared to the normal around 34.6 inches, which supports the D0 designation. This is slightly less than necessary to keep up with demand over the long-term, although serious water shortages have not been reported to date (also, several days of data are missing). To the south, Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi have reported under half of normal rainfall so far this April (3.56 and 2.48 inches, respectively). However, Kapingamarangi recorded more than enough rainfall to keep up with demand during the first 3 months of the year (over 28 inches). In Nukuoro, March (8.49 inches) was considerably drier than normal, but wet enough to keep up with demand. This followed almost 20 inches of rain in February, so no dryness or drought designations are posted for these two locations. North of Lukunor, it has been much wetter at Chuuk, where no drought or dryness designation exists. April totals to date are approaching 14 inches (more than twice normal), and this follows near 11 inches or more each of the three prior months in 2026.

Pohnpei is the only location reliably reporting precipitation recently, and April there has been exceedingly wet. Almost 14 inches of rain fell during the week, bringing month-to-date totals to nearly 25 inches no even halfway through the month. As a result, no dryness or drought designation is assessed, and none is anticipated in the near future.

The northeastern Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) was the only area across the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) reporting drought last week (April 6). Utirik was in severe drought (D2) while moderate drought (D1) was posted at Wotje. However, rainfall has increased dramatically since late March, and this trend continued through the past week. During March 22 – April 13 at Utirik, 16.70 inches of rain was reported, including 8.27 inches during the last half of this past week. Wotje recorded lesser amounts (7.57 inches) since March 20, which included almost 3 inches this past week. These amounts have dramatically improved conditions over the past three weeks, and both locations are designated as abnormally dry (D0) this week. This represents a 2-category improvement at Utirik. To the west, Kwajalein has received more consistent rainfall over the past few months, and no dryness or drought is impacting the region at this time. Just under 2.5 inches last week brought April-to-date totals to near 4.9 inches and year-to-date amounts to over 23.5 inches, the latter amount considerably more than the normal of about 16.5 inches for the period.

Farther south, the central and southern RMI (Ailinglapalap, Jaluit, Majuro, and Mili) is free from dryness and drought. Last week, rainfall totals ranged from 1.23 inches at Ailinglapalap to 2.38 inches at Mili. April totals to date are near or above normal across Ailinglapalap (3.97 inches, 136 percent of normal) and Majuro (4.86 inches, 116 percent of normal), and amounts over the past 30 days exceeded 18 inches in Mili. This followed robust February – March rainfall at Ailinglapalap (27.85 inches, about 2.5 times normal) and near-normal rainfall during January – March at Majuro. Jaluit was the only site reporting subnormal April rainfall to date (2.71 inches, 57 percent of normal) after near-normal amounts last week. But this followed February – March totals exceeding 20 inches.

So far this year, American Samoa has seen alternating dry and wet periods. Currently no dryness or drought designation is supported, but April to date has been quite dry (1.9 inches, under 40 percent of normal) and February amounts were also unfavorably low (5.1 inches, about 40 percent of normal). In between, however, March brought near normal amounts just shy of one foot, and earlier in the year, January brought nearly 28 inches of rain (almost twice normal).

Looking Ahead

Over the next 5–7 days, precipitation is expected to be most prominent across the southern Plains, Midwest, and Northeast. The heaviest precipitation is likely from eastern Kansas into Missouri and northward into eastern Iowa, northern Illinois, and the Great Lakes.

Additional precipitation is expected from the Pacific Northwest into the northern Rockies and High Plains. Dryness is likely to persist across much of the Southwest and Southeast.

Temperatures are expected to be above normal from the northern Rockies into the High Plains, with the greatest departures in western Nebraska, eastern Colorado, and central Montana (10–13 degrees above normal). Cooler-than-normal temperatures are anticipated across much of central Texas (5–9 degrees below normal), while warmer-than-normal conditions are expected across the Mid-Atlantic (5–7 degrees above normal).

The 6-10 day outlooks show that the locations with the best chances of experiencing below-normal temperatures are in the Southwest, especially those locations in Arizona and southern Nevada and California as well as in New England with the best chances in both Arizona and Maine. There is a high likelihood of above-normal temperatures over much of the Midwest, Plains, and into the South and Southeast with the best chances over Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma into southern Nebraska and Iowa. Precipitation chances are expected to be near-normal over southern Florida and southern areas of New Mexico and Arizona. Near-normal precipitation is also expected over the Pacific Northwest, upper Midwest and into the Northern Plains. In the Northeast, there will be a mix of near-normal to below-normal precipitation chances. Most of the rest of the country has above-normal chances of recording above-normal precipitation with the greatest chances over an area from northern Louisiana to Indiana.

Author(s)

Brian Fuchs, National Drought Mitigation Center

Richard Tinker, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC