



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 28, 2026

**2025-2026 Wet Season Rainfall Summary for Hawai'i**

Summary of October 2025 through April 2026 wet season

- Wet season began with at least Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions over the entire state. The worst areas included:
  - Localized areas of Extreme Drought (D3) in the Hāmākua and Ka'u Districts of the Big Island.
  - Severe Drought (D2) over leeward portions of O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, as well as the Hāmākua, Hilo, and Ka'u Districts of the Big Island.
- The wet season forecast, influenced by expected weak La Niña conditions, called for above-average rainfall with a focus on more weather systems bringing significant rainfall to leeward areas.
  - Forecast verified in the form of several significant storm systems with widespread heavy rain and catastrophic flooding.
  - Weak La Niña conditions were present from summer 2025 into spring 2026, then transitioned to ENSO-neutral as of early April 2026.
- Significant wet season rainfall very nearly eliminated drought statewide, with only a small area of Moderate Drought (D1) over and around Mauna Kea, and small areas of D0 over inland portions of Maui and the Big Island remaining at the end of April.
- Rainfall totals for the season were near to above average at most locations, mainly due to a very wet late February through mid-April.
  - October: Very slow start to the wet season with mostly below-average totals statewide. Windward and mauka focus with modest rainfall totals.
  - November: Mostly below-average rainfall statewide, especially for leeward areas, despite significant rain for Hilo and Puna Districts, as well as northern Kaua'i. Drought worsened to D3 (Extreme) for Central Maui.
  - December: Above-average rainfall for Kaua'i County and O'ahu eliminated drought there, except for the southeast coast of O'ahu. Maui County and the Big Island continued below average with slight expansion of existing drought areas.
  - January and February: Near- to above-average rainfall for eastern/southern Big Island in both months, but near to below average elsewhere in the state. Significant amounts in February improved drought conditions for most windward areas by one to two categories.

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- March and April: Well-above-average rainfall statewide with significant flooding in many areas. Remaining drought conditions (except small D1 area in Hāmākua District) were eliminated.

### Wet season statistics

- Overall: Wettest (#1) in the last 30 years (average rankings from 8 sites - representative of all islands and windward/leeward areas), nearly a tie with the 1996-1997 wet season (average ranking 4.8 vs. 5.0, respectively).
- Kaua'i
  - Most rain totals 80 to 150% of average
  - Līhu'e Airport: 41.13 inches (3rd wettest in the last 30 years)
- O'ahu
  - Most rain totals 100 to 200% of average
  - Honolulu Airport: 25.67 inches (2nd wettest)
- Maui County
  - Most rain totals 100 to 250% of average
  - Kahului Airport: 28.25 inches (2nd wettest)
  - Moloka'i Airport: 28.80 inches (2nd wettest)
- Big Island
  - Most rain totals around 90 to 200% of average
  - Hilo Airport: 67.32 inches (20th wettest/11th driest)

### Dry season (May through September 2026) outlook

- The NOAA Climate Prediction Center's (CPC) latest [ENSO forecast](#) favors (~80% chance) El Niño conditions emerging by early summer and a greater than 90% chance of El Niño persisting through the 2026/2027 winter.
  - ENSO-neutral conditions present as of March 2026. CPC issued an El Niño Watch (El Niño conditions favored to develop within the next 6 months) on April 9 .
  - While uncertainty in El Niño strength remains, there is a greater than 60% chance for at least a strong El Niño (Relative Oceanic Niño 3.4 Index  $\geq 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) for late fall through winter.
  - Caveats: The ENSO strength probabilities are NOT the same as the probability of realized impacts. Stronger El Niño events do NOT ensure stronger impacts, but can make it *more likely* that certain impacts could occur.
  - Climate model consensus and the official CPC forecast favor above-normal precipitation for all Hawaiian Islands through early autumn, which coincides with past El Niño impacts in Hawai'i.
  - The 2026 Central Pacific basin hurricane outlook from CPC indicates the likelihood of an above-normal season for the basin, which is located north of the equator between  $140^{\circ}\text{W}$  and the International Date Line. Tropical cyclones and their remnants can be significant contributors to summertime rainfall in Hawaii.

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- Significant wet season rainfall and the potential for above-normal summer rainfall may help delay (but not prevent) drought development and significant wildfire risk.
  - However, the resulting vegetation growth provides abundant fuel and will likely increase the potential for significant wildfire risk once it dries out.
  - CPC indicates a likely switch from above normal summer rainfall to below normal rainfall as we head into our climatological wet season.
- Any eventual drought impacts are expected to be felt first for non-irrigated agriculture, water systems dependent on surface water diversions, and residents relying on rainfall catchment.

### On the Web:

Wet Season Rainfall Total and % of Average Maps (for monthly rainfall summary sites):

Kaua'i: [https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/kauai\\_2526\\_hooilo.gif](https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/kauai_2526_hooilo.gif)

O'ahu: [https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/oahu\\_2526\\_hooilo.gif](https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/oahu_2526_hooilo.gif)

Moloka'i/Lāna'i: [https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/molan\\_2526\\_hooilo.gif](https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/molan_2526_hooilo.gif)

Maui: [https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/maui\\_2526\\_hooilo.gif](https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/maui_2526_hooilo.gif)

Big Island: [https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/bigis\\_2526\\_hooilo.gif](https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/bigis_2526_hooilo.gif)

NOAA National Weather Service Honolulu, HI: <https://www.weather.gov/hfo/>

NOAA Climate Prediction Center: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

U.S. Drought Monitor: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>