



Drought Information Statement for Central and Southeast Illinois

Valid February 26, 2026

Issued By: WFO Lincoln, IL

Contact Information: nws.lincoln@noaa.gov

- The next update will be around Thursday, March 5, if conditions persist or worsen.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/ilx/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates> for regional drought status updates.

Key Messages:

- **Recent Precipitation:** Any significant precipitation in the last week was localized, with most areas seeing nearly dry conditions over the past week.
- **Worsening Dryness:** Central Illinois continues to see worsening drought indicators such as declining soil moisture, lowering water table levels, and reduced streamflow.



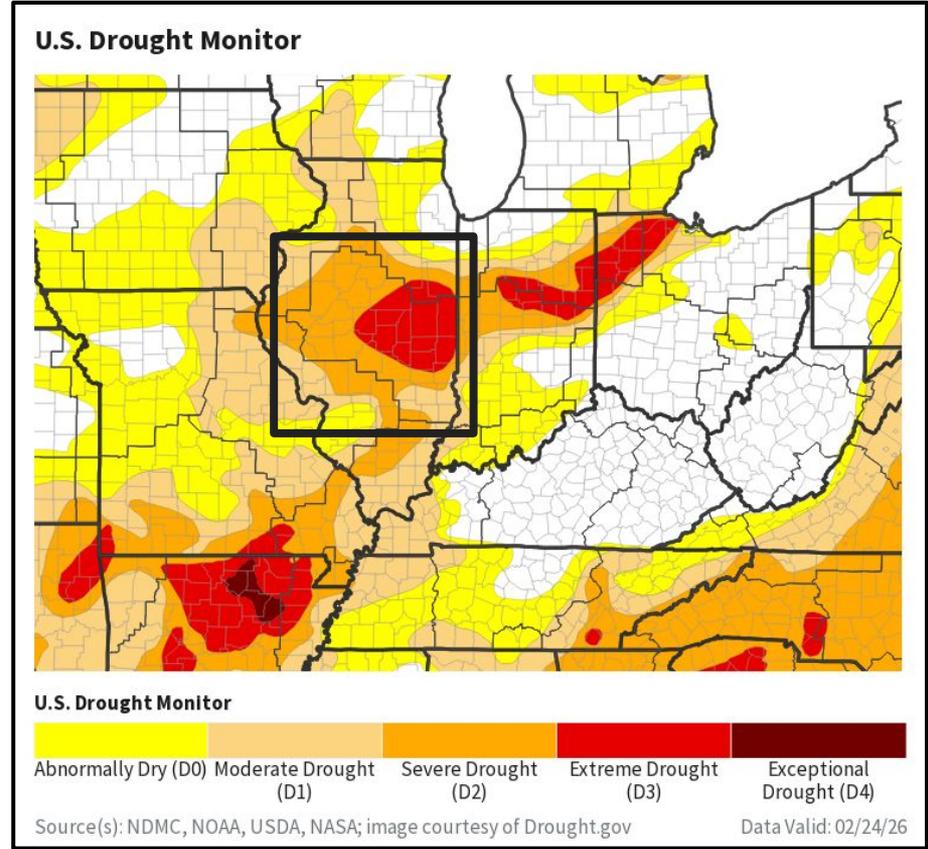


U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for central and southeast Illinois

- **Drought Intensity and Extent:**

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** N/A
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** Portions of east-central Illinois including DeWitt, Macon, Piatt, Douglas, Moultrie, Coles, Edgar, Champaign, and Vermilion counties, and parts of McLean, Logan, Sangamon, Christian, and Clark counties.
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** An expanding area that encompasses much of the area.
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Parts of Knox, Effingham, Jasper, Crawford, Clay, Richland, and Lawrence Counties.
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** None





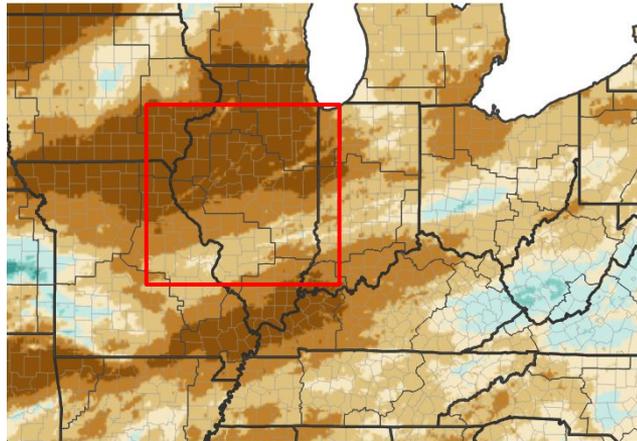
Recent Precipitation

Last 7 days and 30 days

Over the past seven days (right), localized precipitation exceeded normal with some brief heavy rain associated with thunderstorms. However, precipitation was mostly minimal to non-existent.

Looking at the last 30 days (left), most of the region was significantly drier than normal.

30-Day Precipitation: Percent of PRISM Normal

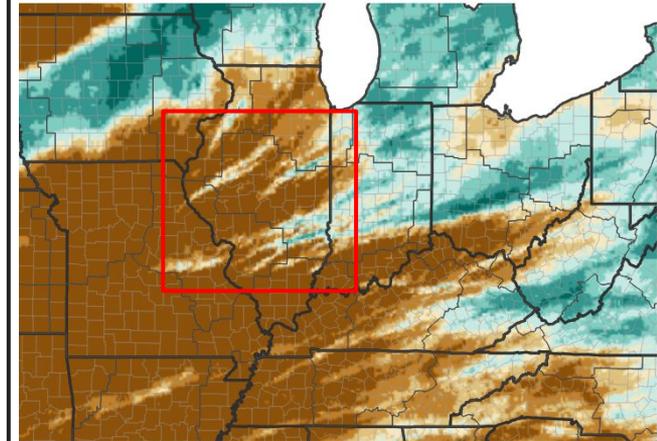


Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service National Water Prediction Service; Data Valid: 02/25/26
image courtesy of Drought.gov

7-Day Precipitation: Percent of PRISM Normal



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service National Water Prediction Service; Last Updated: 02/25/26
image courtesy of Drought.gov

Image Caption: Total precipitation as a percentage of normal, as of February 25. Left image is a 30 day average, right image the last 7 days. Images from [Drought.gov](https://drought.gov).





Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflow is much below normal for most rivers in central parts of the state (less than 10 percent of normal).
- Record low flow on portions of the Sangamon, Kaskaskia, Middle-Fork Vermilion Rivers, and Salt Creek.
- Lake Decatur is reported to be about 4.5 feet below normal. Lake Springfield is about 2 feet below normal.

Agricultural Impacts

- No recent impacts reported in the past week.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Burn bans have been implemented in DeWitt, Champaign, and Piatt Counties.

Other Impacts

- Natural water sources and creeks have dried up, ponds are very low, and grazing stockpiles are quickly depleting.
- Soil moisture is low to record low, especially at deep levels. Water tables are near record low levels.
- The town of Sullivan declared a water emergency on February 11th due to ongoing drought and a reduced water supply. Restrictions on non-essential water use are in effect until March 1st, and residents are urged to conserve water.

Mitigation Actions

- Voluntary Stage 1 water rationing is in effect in Decatur.
- Voluntary water conservation requested in Bloomington and Sullivan.





Long Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Above normal precipitation is favored (40-50% chance) for most of central and southeast IL for March.
- Above normal temperatures are favored (40% to 50% chance) across central IL for March.

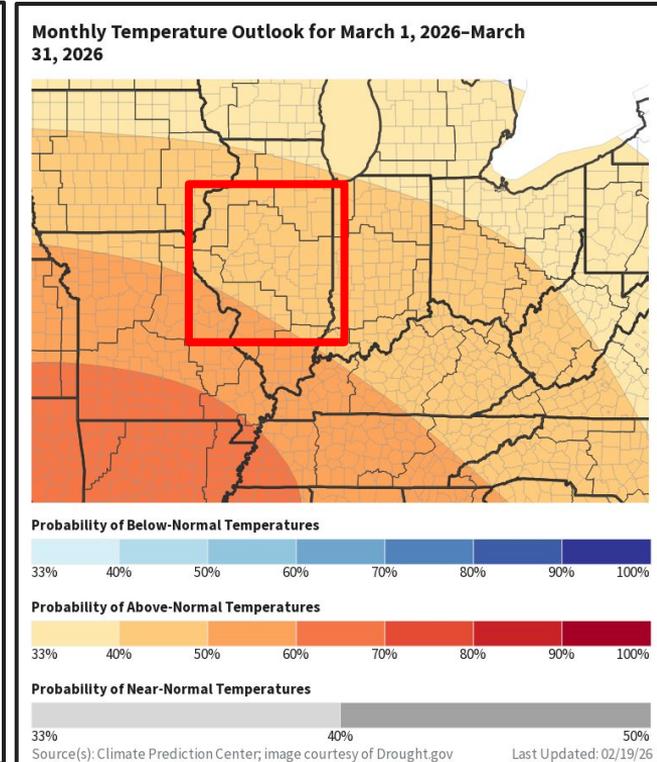
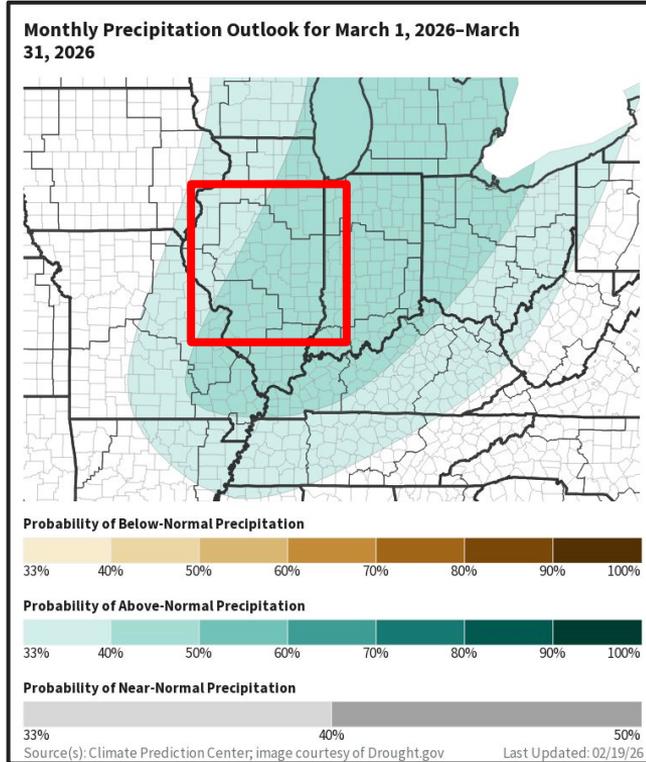


Image Caption: Precipitation (left) and temperature (right) outlooks for March. Check [weather.gov/ilx](#) for updated forecasts.





Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Drought is forecast to improve across the area through the end of May.

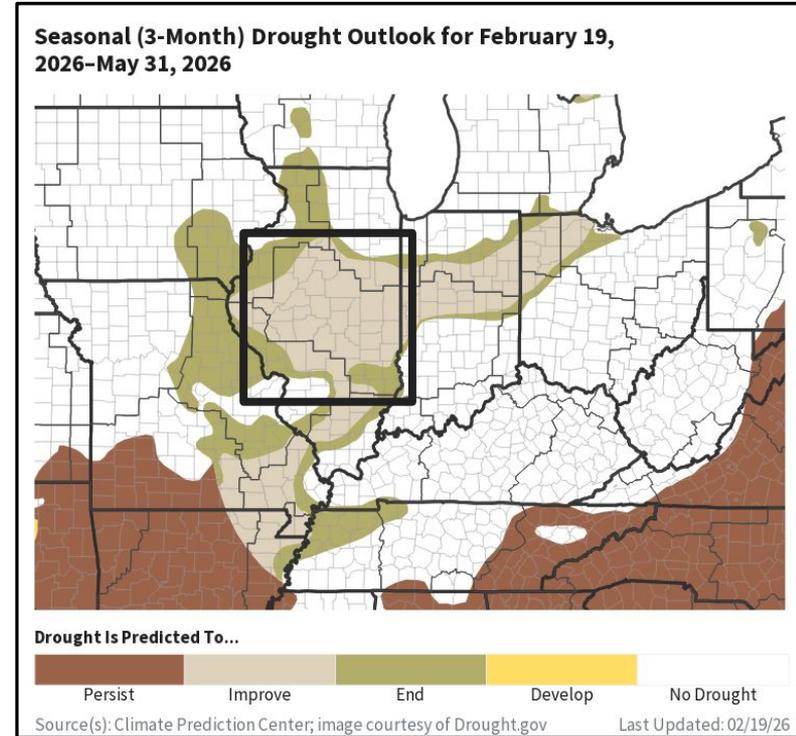


Image Caption:

Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook released Feb 19, valid through May 31, 2026. Images from [Drought.gov](#).

Links to the latest:

- [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

