



# Drought Information Statement for Central and Southeast Illinois

Valid March 19, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Lincoln, IL

Contact Information: [nws.lincoln@noaa.gov](mailto:nws.lincoln@noaa.gov)

- This product will be updated around March 26, 2026 unless drought conditions improve significantly.
- 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:** Portions of central and southeastern IL saw heavy rain on Sunday. This rainfall had beneficial impacts on the ongoing drought.
- **Improvement!** Recent precipitation resulted in improving drought conditions.





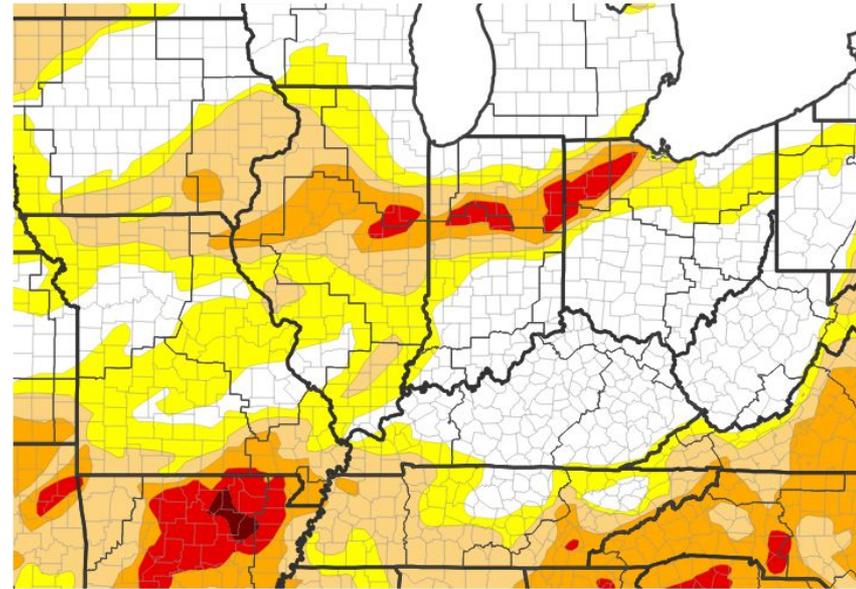
# U.S. Drought Monitor

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

- **Drought intensity and Extent**

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** None
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** Southeastern McLean County, far northern Piatt, Champaign, and Vermilion Counties
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** Most of central IL
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Northwestern Knox County, Extending from Scott County to Clark County
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** Most of the southeast 6 counties (Effingham, Jasper, Crawford, Clay, Richland, and Lawrence Counties)

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 03/17/26



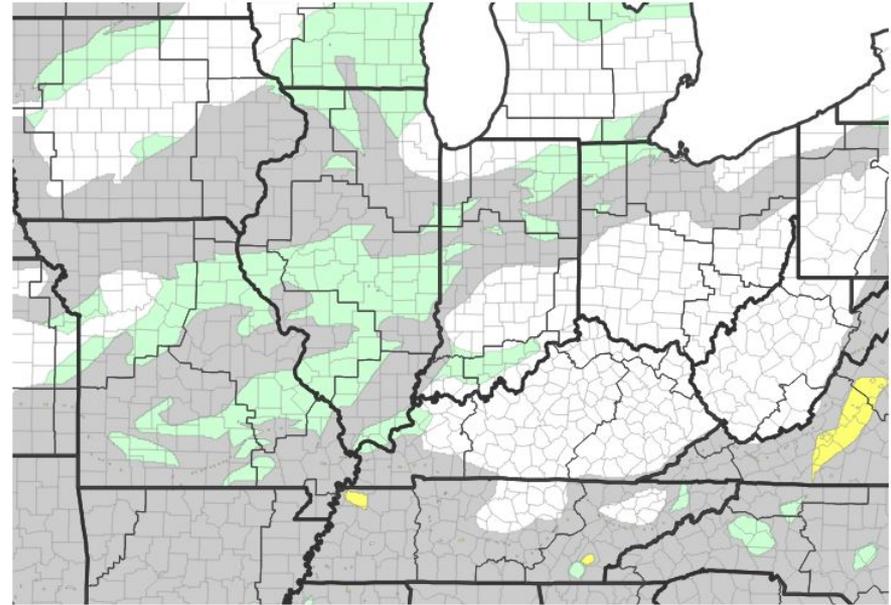


# Recent Change in Drought Intensity

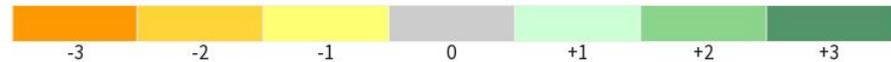
Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for Central and Southeast Illinois

- **One Week Drought Monitor Class Change.**
  - Drought Worsened: none
  - No Change: Northern Schuyler, Mason, Tazewell, McLean, Piatt, Dewitt, Champaign, and Vermilion Counties and areas north. Southern Effingham, Jasper, and Crawford Counties and areas south.
  - Drought Improved: Remainder of central and southeast IL

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map



Drought Change Since Last Week



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 03/17/26

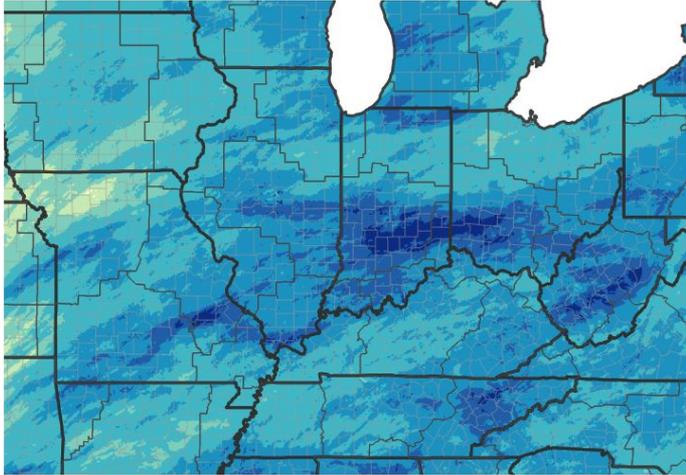




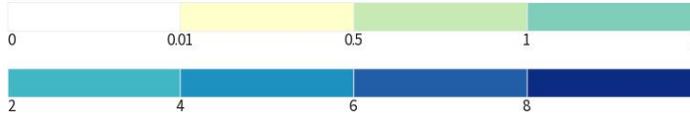
# Precipitation

Over the past 30 days, precipitation has been above normal across the entire central and southeastern IL area. As much as 2-3+ times normal (200-300+%) was noted for much of the area near the I-72 corridor.

### 30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)

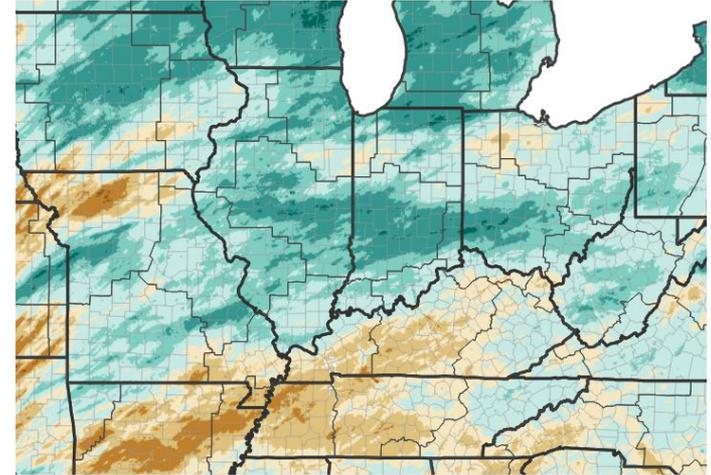


Inches of Precipitation

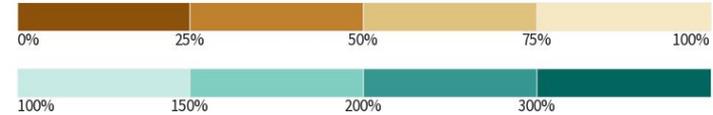


Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 03/19/26

### 30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 03/19/26





# Summary of Impacts

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

## Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflow is near normal for much of the area, though a few rivers are falling to below normal again in east-central IL where lower precipitation amounts were received from Sunday's storms.
- Lake Decatur is near to slightly above normal. Lake Springfield is about 1 foot below normal (as of 3/13).

## Agricultural Impacts

- No recent impacts.

## Fire Hazard Impacts

- No recent impacts.

## Other Impacts

- Deep soil moisture remains below normal around D3 Drought areas, but has otherwise recovered at most observing sites.

## Mitigation Actions

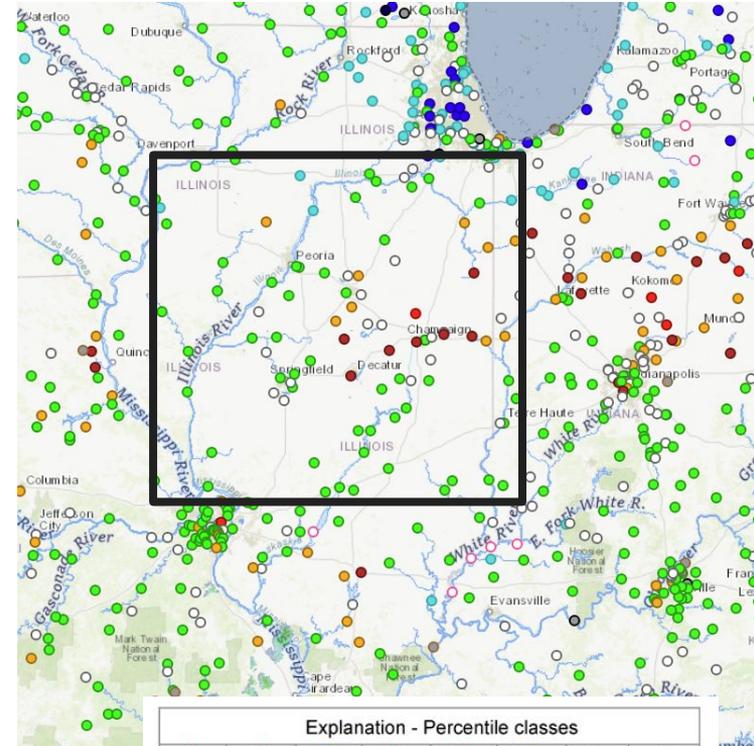
- Voluntary Stage 1 water rationing is ongoing in Decatur.
- Voluntary water conservation requested in Bloomington.





# Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Streamflows have decreased, with some below normal again. Most are near normal. A few upstate (Chicago Metro) are still above normal.



Explanation - Percentile classes							
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Low	<10 Much below normal	10-24 Below normal	25-75 Normal	76-90 Above normal	>90 Much above normal	High	Not-ranked

*Image Caption: USGS average streamflow valid March 12, 2026*

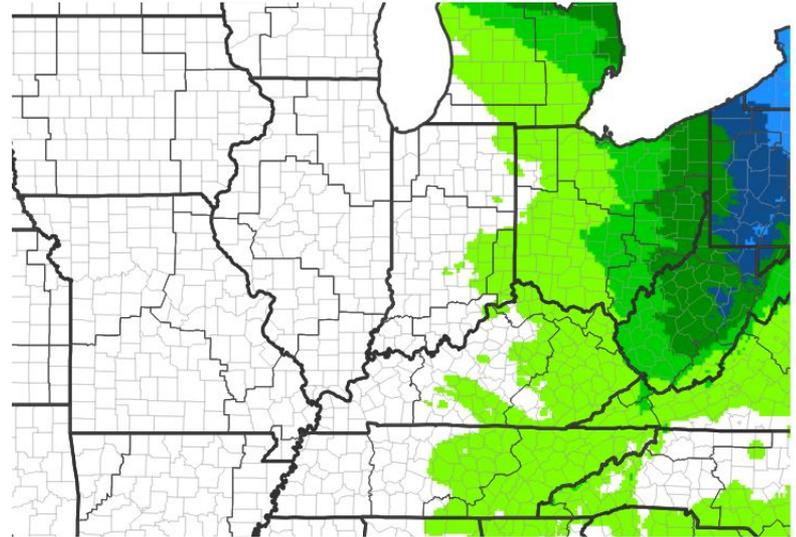




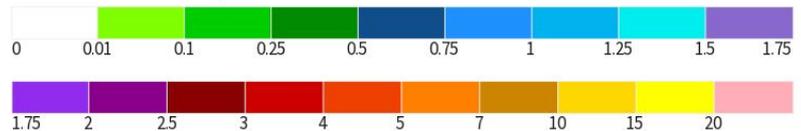
# Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- At this time, we don't have additional precipitation in the forecast through the next 7 days.
- However, there is a 20% chance of an isolated storm in southeast IL Sunday evening (3/22) and a 30-40% chance of thunderstorms next Thursday, 3/26. Storms could generate localized pockets of over a half inch of rain.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for March 19, 2026–March 26, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/19/26





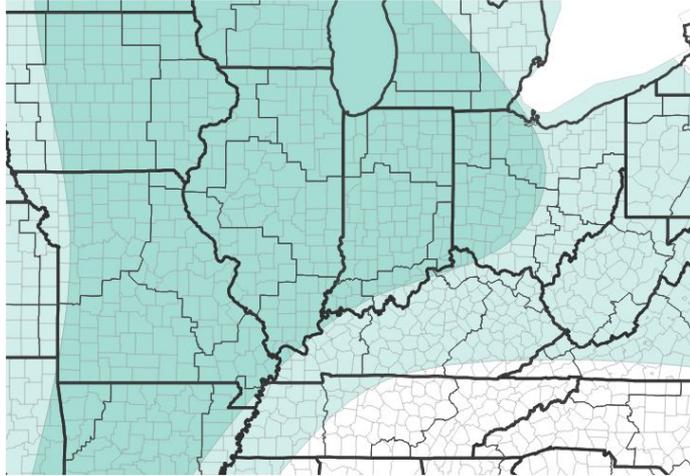
# Long-Range Outlooks

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

Probabilities are leaning in the direction of above normal precipitation (40-50% chance) in the month of April.

The month of April is also leaning slightly towards above normal temperatures (33-50% chance).

### Monthly Precipitation Outlook for April 1, 2026–April 30, 2026



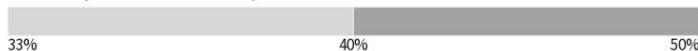
Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



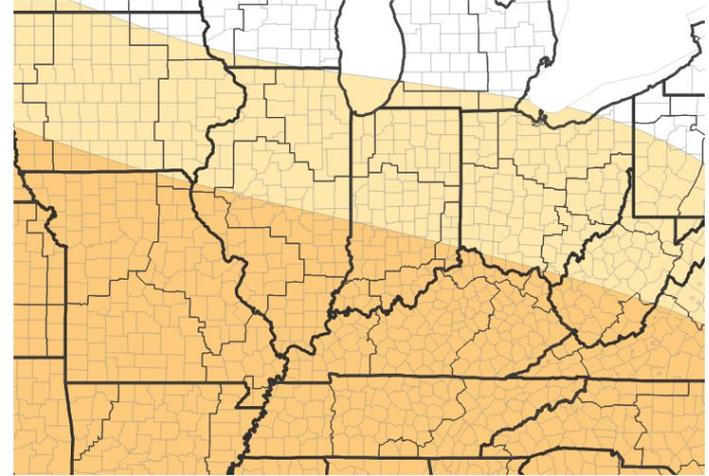
Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/19/26

### Monthly Temperature Outlook for April 1, 2026–April 30, 2026



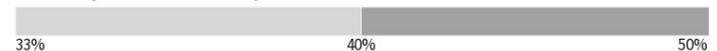
Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/19/26



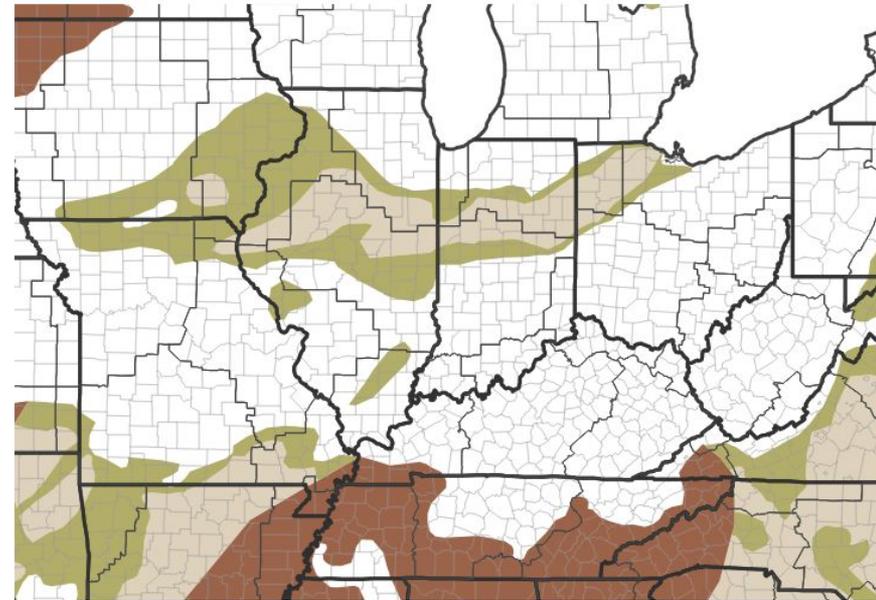


# Drought Outlook

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

Drought is projected to improve or end across much of the area through the end of June.

## Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for March 19, 2026–June 30, 2026



### Drought Is Predicted To...



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/19/26

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

