



England battles worst drought in 50 years

Description

UK: Using hosepipes has been banned and bottled water is in high demand amid the driest summer in decades

A drought was officially declared on Friday in eight out of 14 areas of England during what has been the driest summer in 50 years, the UK Environment Department said in a [statement](#).

Parts of southwest, southern, central and eastern England, as well as North and South London, have had their status updated following a meeting of the National Drought Group, which includes Environment Agency experts, members of the government, water companies and key representative groups.

The formal declaration of a drought, which was last made in 2018, allows the Environment Agency and water companies to *“step up their actions to manage the impacts and press ahead with implementing the stages of their pre-agreed drought plans.”* These plans, among other steps, involve taking more water from rivers, imposing temporary restrictions such as on the use of hosepipes, transferring water between different areas of the country and even *“rexygenating water and rescuing fish in distress where river flows are especially low.”*

Several major water companies have already announced restrictions on using hosepipes to water gardens, wash cars or fill paddling pools, with violators facing significant fines. The bans affect more than 32 million people in total.

Water companies are urging Britons to contribute to the effort by spending less time in the shower and even, under a radical proposal by Wessex Water, by flushing toilets *“only when you need to.”*

Amid drought warnings and soaring temperatures – reaching up to 35 degrees Celsius in London – the last few days have seen panic buying of water. Following the government’s drought announcement, some stores have reportedly started rationing bottled water.

According to the Met Office’s forecast, temperatures will fall early next week, with thunderstorms

expected in most of England, Wales and Scotland.

Category

1. ECO-Climate-Environment
2. Main
3. Survival-Prepping-Security

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