

# DROUGHT & YOUR HEALTH

MT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS  
FOR A HEALTHY CLIMATE



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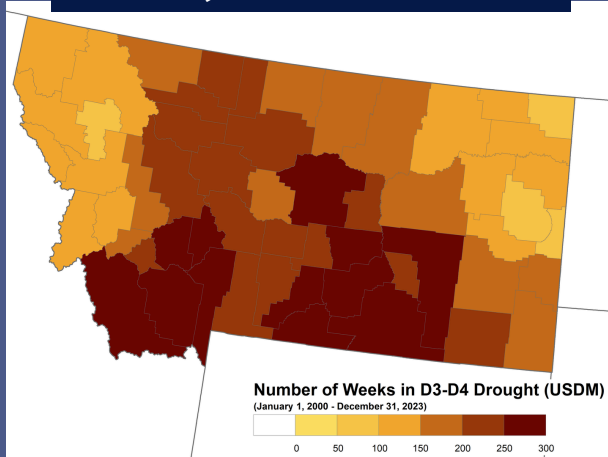
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## DROUGHT IN MONTANA



Droughts are common in Montana, and are getting longer and more intense. Droughts can have some unexpected health effects.

- **Toxins and diseases** can become concentrated in well water when the water table is too low.
- **Dust** from dried-out soil and **smoke** from more frequent wildfires can harm your lungs.
- **Serious mental health problems** can happen when livelihoods and traditions are at stake.

Check your local drought level at: [drought.gov/states/montana](https://drought.gov/states/montana).

## DUST AND SMOKE

Check your local air quality at [Airnow.gov](https://airnow.gov). Dust can be deadly.

Wear an N95 mask outside when you can see smoke or dust.

Close car and house windows.  
Get a HEPA air filter (or make one using a furnace filter and a box fan).



## MENTAL HEALTH

3/4ths of farmers & ranchers in MT report feeling distressed by drought.  
You're not alone.

Stick together. Check in on your neighbors, friends, and family often.

Tell your doctor if you're anxious, losing sleep, or feeling hopeless.  
They can help.

## POLLUTION & DISEASE

Monitor water quality, especially private wells. Toxins build up in droughts.

Cover up and use mosquito repellent; mosquitos can carry deadly diseases. Eliminate standing water around your home.

Water with blue-green algae can be very toxic. Don't touch or drink it, and don't let pets or livestock near it.

Blue-green algae looks like greenish dust, and has no leaves. Photo: Christian Fischer.



## FINANCES

If you're worried about your farm or ranch, MT Drought Management has collected financial and data resources for you at [drought.mt.gov/resources](https://drought.mt.gov/resources).