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Abnormally Dry and Drought Conditions Are On The Rise

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If you have any stakes in agriculture, you may have noticed a fairly rapid drying trend as summer has come to a close. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor on September 2, 76 percent of Indiana is considered abnormally dry—up from just 26 percent one week earlier. Moderate drought conditions have also expanded from less than 1 percent on August 26 to over 7 percent on September 2. The driest conditions are in several counties along the Ohio River in southwestern Indiana, as well as sporadically across northern Indiana and along the Illinois-Indiana border.

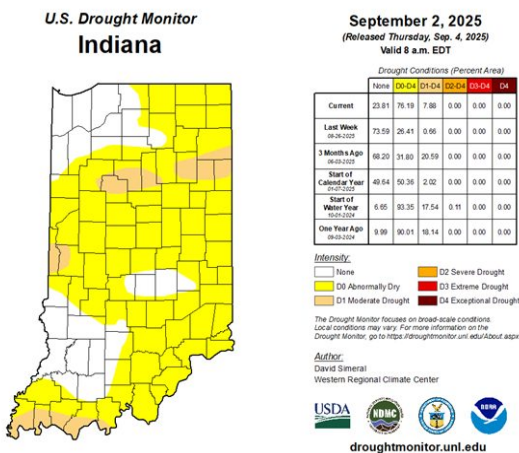


Figure 1: Three-fourths of the state are now abnormally dry, while several counties are also dealing with moderate drought conditions, as indicated by tan shading.

Meanwhile, 30-day precipitation is fairly lacking—especially across northern Indiana. Several counties around Indianapolis and to the north and east have seen less than 25 percent of their normal precipitation totals since August 4. Even across southeastern Indiana, conditions have rapidly become drier over the course of the final weeks of August. Only a few counties across southwestern Indiana and Northwest Indiana have observed near to above normal precipitation.

Soil moisture forecasts do not bode well for improving conditions. Anomalies are at least 40-80mm below normal across northern Indiana in the coming weeks. The 8-14-day precipitation outlook for the September 11-17 period is leaning toward below normal precipitation, especially for eastern Indiana, and equal chances for above normal and below normal precipitation through the end of the month. The U.S. Drought Monitor has accounted for this, with drought development likely across almost the entire state into September. Precipitation totals across Indiana tend to decrease slightly in September before increasing again in October and November, so it will be crucial to monitor soil conditions as we head through the Fall months.

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