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122 Days Without Rain – Longest Dry Spell in St. George’s History

St. George, Utah has gone 122 days without any measurable precipitation, the longest stretch since the National Weather Service began keeping records for the city in 1893. The prior record of 121 days was set in 1929.

“This isn’t a good record to break,” said Ron Thompson, general manager of the [Washington County Water Conservancy District](#), the regional water provider for several cities in southern Utah, including St. George. “Fortunately, we have local water storage that will meet the region’s immediate needs, but this prolonged drought underscores the need to diversify and enhance our water supplies to protect our communities.”

Southern Utah is a desert and has experienced 12 years of drought during the last two decades. The record-breaking rainfall deficit demonstrates that reliable water storage and delivery systems are essential, particularly given southern Utah’s major population centers depend exclusively on the Virgin River Basin. “There are significant risks to a single-source water system, especially when that system serves one of the nation’s fastest-growing populations and economies,” said Thompson.

Based on the projected population growth, current water use and conservation goals, water demands will exceed local supply as early as the late 2020s. Washington County is expected to grow twice as fast as Utah and four times the national rate over the next several decades. “As a regional water supplier, our district must plan and build reliable and sustainable systems to meet current and future demand,” said Thompson.

The [Lake Powell Pipeline](#) (LPP) is part of Washington County’s comprehensive, long-term water supply plan that includes maximizing use of available local water supply, increasing water conservation and developing new resources. The LPP will transport water from Lake Powell through an approximately 140-mile buried pipeline to Washington and Kane counties. The project, currently in the [permitting stages](#), will diversify water supplies, enhance reliability and help meet the needs of growing communities with the necessary margin of safety. LPP would store water in the local Sand Hollow Reservoir, helping to provide water in dry times similar to those occurring now.

“We know what it’s like to live off water stored in our reservoirs,” said Thompson. “But you have to have water to fill the reservoirs. The LPP introduces a second, more reliable water supply to our communities to protect us against drought and climate change – we need the LPP.”

(more)

About Washington County Water Conservancy District

The Washington County Water Conservancy District is a not-for-profit public agency established in 1962 to manage Southern Utah’s regional water needs. The district oversees the development, stabilization, management, acquisition and conservation of water resources in Washington County in an ongoing effort to provide a safe, reliable water supply for current and future generations. Visit www.wcwcd.org for more information.

About the Lake Powell Pipeline

The Lake Powell Pipeline (LPP) is part of a comprehensive, long-term water supply plan for southern Utah that includes new resource development and increased water conservation. The LPP will annually transport up to 86,249 acre feet of water from Lake Powell through an approximately 140-mile buried pipeline to Washington and Kane counties. Visit LPPUtah.org for more information.

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