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## **DROUGHT CONTINUES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY DESPITE RECENT STORMS** **Underscores Need to Diversify Water Supply**

The recent storms brought Washington County some much-needed moisture but it wasn't enough to recover from an ongoing drought, according to Ron Thompson, general manager of Washington County Water Conservancy District.

"The moisture made significant improvements in our watershed, but we're still well under average for this time of year," he said.

Kolob, which feeds into the Virgin River, has 66 percent of average precipitation accumulation while Gutz Peak and Little Grassy, which feeds into the Santa Clara River, are both less than 50 percent of average.

"Fortunately we have reservoirs, wells and other resources to buffer the consequences of drought today, but it's essential we continue our efforts to protect and expand our water supply," said Thompson.

The district is currently working on several projects to improve our current water situation. Efforts include the implementation and funding of dozens of conservation programs and rebates; drilling of additional wells near Sand Hollow Reservoir; and the development of Ash Creek Pipeline and Toquer Reservoir, which will capture and store approximately 3,000 acre feet of water annually.

Other long-term projects, such as the Lake Powell Pipeline, will diversify our resources beyond the Virgin River basin, providing an important resource in times of drought as well as doubling the county's water resources.

"Diversity in water sources, much like diversity in your financial portfolio, offers added security," said Eric Millis, director of the Utah Division of Water Resources. "Most of our state's major population centers already benefit from diverse water sources, with the exception of Washington County. Washington is Utah's most arid and drought-prone county making the diversity of its water resources a top priority for the state."

(more)

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The district currently has adequate storage for 2015 culinary water deliveries but reminds all residents that avoiding water waste helps to protect our long term water supply. “We can and should do more to use our water wisely to offset what’s appearing to be another very low water year here in Southern Utah,” said Thompson.

### ***About Washington County Water Conservancy District***

Washington County Water Conservancy District, a not-for-profit public agency, was 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, sustainable water supply for current and future generations. Visit [www.wcwcd.org](http://www.wcwcd.org) for more information.

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*Pop out box #1:*

### **Current Water Conditions for Southwest Utah**

Seasonal precipitation	52% average
Reservoir storage	46% capacity
Virgin River water availability index	21%

*Pop out box #2:*

### **What can YOU do to use water wisely?**

- Adjust your sprinkler system seasonally. You should currently be watering once a week.
- Use turf grass sparingly
- Adjust sprinkler heads so they don’t spray walls, driveways or sidewalks
- Water in cycles to avoid run-off
- Core-aerate your soil annually
- Hand water dry spots
- Water trees and shrubs with a drip system
- Use mulch
- Cover pools
- Repair leaking fixtures
- Turn off the water while shaving or brushing your teeth
- Take showers instead of baths
- Use a plugged sink if washing the dishes by hand
- Purchase high efficiency appliances

See more water-saving tips at [wcwcd.org](http://wcwcd.org).