# Environment Agency declares extra Bank Holiday to coax rain amid worst drought on record



In a somewhat unconventional response to the severe drought conditions affecting parts of the UK, the Environment Agency has announced an extra Bank Holiday aimed at boosting rainfall and replenishing reservoirs and aquifers. This initiative comes amidst alarming statistics indicating that areas in Wales and the South of England are experiencing their lowest average rainfall since records began. Remarkably, the agency noted that these regions tend to receive torrential rain during established Bank Holiday weekends, suggesting a whimsical correlation between public holidays and precipitation.

An Environment Agency representative commented that, "The UK has had the driest winter and spring on record, and this is directly linked to an absence of Bank Holidays." They argued that offering an additional day off for families is a sure-fire method to ensure rainfall. This perspective, although somewhat light-hearted, reflects a serious concern regarding water shortages as the country grapples with historically dry conditions.

As the nation approaches summer, the reality of drought looms larger. Reports indicate that England has witnessed its driest start to spring in 69 years, with reservoir levels now critically low. The government has been urged to take action, prompting a £2.2 billion investment in water infrastructure aimed at combating pollution and enhancing water resilience, according to recent government announcements. Water companies are being encouraged to ramp up efforts to mitigate the impacts of the increasingly dry weather, particularly as the National Drought Group warns of a potential summer drought.

Farmers, too, are feeling the pinch of these dry conditions. The National Farmers' Union has reported significant adverse effects on crop production, with some crops failing entirely and livestock yields at risk due to dwindling water resources. The situation is exacerbated by the unusually high temperatures and the ongoing lack of rainfall, which has led to increased irrigation needs, thus compounding the pressure on water supply.

With river flows already plummeting across northern and central England and some areas declaring drought status, the risk of shortages extends beyond agriculture to affect wildlife and recreational waterways. Reports suggest that water companies have begun imposing hosepipe bans in response to depleting water supplies, a measure that speaks to the severity of the situation.

As discussions continue regarding the effectiveness of traditional drought management strategies, the call for creativity in addressing these pressing water issues becomes more pronounced. The Environment Agency's whimsical strategy of correlating Bank Holidays with rain might seem far-fetched, yet it underscores the urgency of rethinking how society plans for and responds to climatic extremes.

In sum, while the prospect of an additional Bank Holiday offers a light-hearted distraction from the dire realities of drought, it also highlights the seriousness of a water crisis that is rapidly unfolding across the UK. The interplay between weather patterns, seasonal holidays, and critical water management presents a complex challenge that requires urgent and comprehensive action.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.newsbiscuit.com/post/drought-hit-areas-to-receive-extra-bank-holiday), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/06/england-faces-drought-summer-reservoir-water-levels-dwindle)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.newsbiscuit.com/post/drought-hit-areas-to-receive-extra-bank-holiday), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/drought-planning-stepped-up-amid-potential-hottest-june-on-record)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/2025-05-07/englands-driest-start-to-spring-in-69-years-raises-risk-of-summer-drought), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/07/drought-conditions-already-hitting-uk-crop-production-farmers-say)
* Paragraph 4 – [[7]](https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/england-environment-agency-government-met-office-union-b2143306.html), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/25/uk-drought-extreme-heat-dry)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.newsbiscuit.com/post/drought-hit-areas-to-receive-extra-bank-holiday> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/06/england-faces-drought-summer-reservoir-water-levels-dwindle> - England is facing a potential summer drought due to the driest start to spring in 69 years, with reservoir levels lower than expected. The lack of rainfall has led to concerns about water shortages, with the Environment Agency urging water companies to increase resilience to dry weather and encourage customers to reduce demand. The government has also announced plans to invest £2.2 billion in water infrastructure to tackle pollution and increase water resilience.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/drought-planning-stepped-up-amid-potential-hottest-june-on-record> - The National Drought Group, chaired by the Environment Agency, has discussed plans to maintain water supply resilience amid ongoing hot and dry weather. England has experienced potentially the hottest June on record, with temperatures soaring to 32.2°C on the hottest day. The group emphasized the need for water companies to increase resilience to dry weather and encourage customers to reduce demand, building on the government's Plan for Water.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-05-07/englands-driest-start-to-spring-in-69-years-raises-risk-of-summer-drought> - England has had its driest start to spring since 1956, with just half the usual rainfall recorded in April and only a quarter in March. Reservoir levels are lower than in 2022, and farmers are already irrigating crops, putting extra pressure on water supplies. The Environment Agency warns of a 'medium' risk of drought this summer and urges water companies to cut leaks and help customers save water.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/may/07/drought-conditions-already-hitting-uk-crop-production-farmers-say> - Farmers report that drought conditions are already affecting UK crop production, with some crops failing and livestock yields at risk. The National Farmers' Union warns that significant rainfall in early May is essential to avoid further losses. Reservoir levels are lower than in 2022, and river flows are exceptionally low across northern and central England, prompting concerns about water availability for agriculture.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/25/uk-drought-extreme-heat-dry> - The UK is facing a drought due to extreme heat and dry conditions, with the National Drought Group meeting to discuss strategies. Record-breaking heatwaves have led to soil drying, prompting farmers to increase irrigation and raising evaporation rates in waterways. The Environment Agency is monitoring river levels and working with water companies to manage resources and implement drought plans.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/england-environment-agency-government-met-office-union-b2143306.html> - The UK is experiencing dry conditions, with rivers, reservoirs, and aquifers depleted, affecting agriculture, water supplies, and wildlife, and increasing the risk of wildfires. Declaring a drought will prompt the Environment Agency and water companies to implement plans to manage low water levels, including measures like hosepipe bans. Four water companies have already imposed hosepipe bans or signalled intentions to do so.