National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network
United States Drought Monitor (USDM) Metadata

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Background	The United States Drought Monitor (USDM), established in 1999, is a weekly map of drought conditions that is produced jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The USDM website is hosted and maintained by the NDMC. The map is based on measurements of climatic, hydrologic and soil conditions as well as reported impacts and observations from more than 350 contributors around the country. Eleven climatologists from the partner organizations take turns serving as the lead author each week. The authors examine all the data and use their best judgment to reconcile any differences in what different sources are saying. The dataset includes weekly values for every contiguous US county and the District of Columbia from 2000-2016. The dataset has been compiled to estimate wetness and dryness of a particular area. This is important for the agriculture as well as health sectors. The data can be used to examine local and national trends in drought information.
Data Values	Values provide a snapshot of drought conditions on a particular day during the week leading up to the date provided for a particular observation. Values range from 0-4, and are defined as follows: D0: Abnormally Dry D1: Moderate Drought D2: Severe Drought D3: Extreme Drought D4: Exceptional Drought No Drought is noted as 9.
Geographic Scale & Scope	Data includes all counties in the lower 48 states plus the District of Columbia.
Time Period	January 4, 2000 – December 27, 2016. Known to be accurate as of time period end date.
Raw Data Processing	Data were downloaded from the Drought Monitor server and were originally provided as weekly county values. The highest category county was used as the final county value. For example, if a county was 65% in D2 and 35% in D3, the final value for the county would be D3. No data were lost or omitted during calculation. All data that were available were used. Data will be updated on an ad hoc basis, when necessary.
Additional Information	McKee, T.B., N. J. Doesken, and J. Kliest, 1993: The relationship of drought frequency and duration to time scales. In Proceedings of the 8th Conference of Applied Climatology, 17-22 January, Anaheim, CA. American Meterological Society, Boston, MA. 179-18. Tinker, R. & National Drought Mitigation Center Staff (Eds). Last modified 2017. “United States Drought Monitor.” Retrieved from http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx