



## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Release: Immediate  
Date: June 7, 2012

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### **Drought disappears from N.C. for first time in nearly two years**

**RALEIGH** – Recent rainfall has helped to rid North Carolina of drought conditions for the first time in almost two years.

The rain the state received from Tropical Storm Beryl helped eliminate lingering moderate drought conditions in eastern North Carolina. There are still 36 central and southeastern counties experiencing abnormally dry conditions. The last time the state was drought-free was during the week of June 29, 2010.

Abnormally dry is not a drought category. Rather, it describes less severe dry conditions, which still require heightened awareness by water users in the affected counties. These counties should monitor their water supply sources for diminished capacity and plan for potentially worsening conditions if the dryness persists.

These conditions are reflected on the federal drought map for North Carolina, which is released every Thursday. To see the most recent drought map, go to [www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org).

“Recent rains have improved many streams and groundwater levels,” said Donna Jackson, chairwoman of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “Major reservoirs, including those in the Triangle and Catawba River basin, are full and there is a sufficient water supply available at this time.”

While recent rainfall has brought recovery to surface water and topsoil, there is a deeper groundwater deficit. There are lower water levels in wells, which help supply individual and community water needs.

“North Carolina’s rainfall becomes more difficult to forecast, as well as less reliable, during the summer months,” said Michael Moneypenny, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Raleigh and a member of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “Weather systems are typically weaker and the bulk of our rainfall comes from scattered shower and thunderstorm activity that pops up during the heat of the day.”

Ryan Boyles, the state climatologist who works at N.C. State University, added: “Winter climate conditions can be predicted several months in advance due to factors such as La Niña. However, summer seasonal conditions are not currently predictable, and the upcoming summer is just as likely to be dry as wet.”

With little guidance to rely upon, underlying dryness will have to be monitored closely. Conditions can worsen quickly because North Carolina’s hot summer months can bring about higher rates of evaporation.

For tips and ways to save water, go to [www.savewaternc.org](http://www.savewaternc.org).

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