

Drought Declared Across East Anglia

29 July 2026

Situation

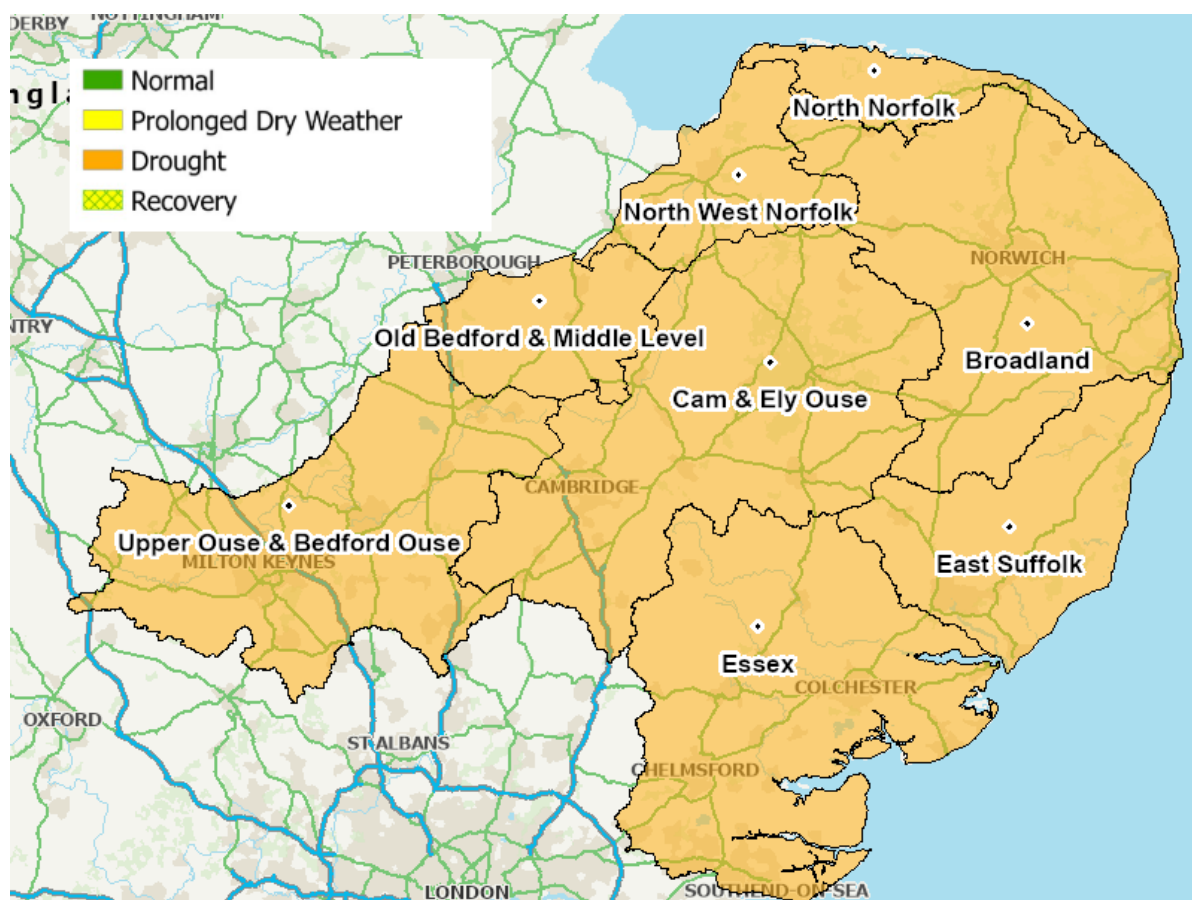
July has seen little to no rainfall across East Anglia, and the Met Office is forecasting a fourth heatwave for the UK this week. Three of our four water companies have introduced Temporary Use Bans (sometimes called hosepipe bans), and we are starting to see more impacts on the environment. This means it is now appropriate to declare that **Drought** is affecting all our catchments.

Our monitoring shows that more rivers are experiencing exceptionally low flows, with some at their lowest levels on record. Groundwater levels are also declining, leaving some abstractors temporarily unable to access water supplies.

Soils are extremely dry and with forecasts for continuing hot and dry conditions we are declaring:

The following catchments are experiencing 'Drought':

Upper Bedford Ouse	Old Bedford & Middle Level	Cam & Ely Ouse	North-West Norfolk
North Norfolk	Broadland Rivers	East Suffolk	Essex



customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88

What we are doing

Our teams are closely monitoring local water levels and environmental conditions. Specialists are analysing data and samples, while field staff respond to environmental incidents, including river pollution and reports of fish in distress.

We are working with Internal Drainage Boards, water abstractor groups, farmers and water companies to manage available water supplies. As a result, some abstractors have had to reduce or temporarily stop taking water to comply with their licence conditions.

These temporary restrictions are reviewed regularly, and abstraction is allowed to resume as soon as conditions improve. However, if the hot and dry weather continues, further restrictions may be needed.

Working with water companies

We are working closely with the water companies operating across East Anglia to share information on water availability, operational activities, and any emerging risks or concerns.

Affinity Water, Anglian Water and Cambridge Water have advised their customers of the introduction of Temporary Use Bans (TUBs) and Essex and Suffolk Water have appealed for restraint. Further information, including guidance on water conservation and details of individual Drought Plans, is available on their respective websites.

How you can help

We can all play a part in using water wisely and helping to protect this precious resource. Practical water-saving tips for households and businesses are available from [Waterwise](#).

We also encourage the public to report any sightings of fish in distress or other environmental impacts by calling our **24-hour Incident Hotline** on **0800 80 70 60**.

Kind regards

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More information can be found here:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency