

# Supporting Municipalities During Drought

## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions



Much of southern Manitoba is experiencing drought conditions in 2021. Municipalities are working to manage impacts to their operations and to their rate payers. Some specific questions that have been received by municipalities are described below, along with additional links and contact information.

### What is the difference between a local State of Agricultural Emergency and a State of Local Emergency?

A declaration of a **local state of agricultural emergency** is a serious situation, but not an emergency declared by law.

Manitoba law allows for the declaration of a **State of Local Emergency (SOLE)**. This gives a municipality the authority to use certain powers outlined in the Emergency Measures Act. These include:

- putting emergency plans in place
- using any property considered necessary to prevent or reduce the effects of any emergency or disaster
- authorizing or requiring any qualified person to provide aid when necessary
- controlling, allowing or banning travel to or from any area, or on any road, street or highway
- evacuating people, removing livestock and personal property and arranging for their proper care
- controlling or preventing the movement of people and the removal of livestock from any designated area that may have a contaminating disease
- authorizing the entry into any building, or upon any land, without warrant
- causing the demolition or removal of any trees, structure or crops to prevent, or reduce the effects of an emergency or a disaster
- authorizing, getting and distributing essential resources and providing essential services
- providing for the restoration of essential facilities, the distribution of essential supplies and the maintenance and co-ordination of emergency medical, social and other essential services
- spending funds as necessary to pay expenses caused by the emergency or disaster

### Who can producers call for more information about support for drought impacts?

- Contact your local ARD/MASC Service Centres. [Find an ARD/MASC Service Centre](#) or by calling toll-free 1-844-769-6224, and by email at [ARD@gov.mb.ca](mailto:ARD@gov.mb.ca).
- The service centres can provide information on AgriInsurance claims, refer you to help with wells and dugouts for livestock on pastures, list your hay or other feed available for sale, or connect you with a crop or livestock specialist for advice on drought-related production and herd management issues. For information on Crown land temporarily available for haying, you can directly contact the Agricultural Crown Lands (ACL) Leasing Program at 204-867-6550 or an ACL representative.
- Visit [www.manitoba.ca/agriculture](http://www.manitoba.ca/agriculture) and click on Dry Conditions and Drought. This site provides producers access to many drought related resources. Information about recently announced AgriRecovery programs will be posted on this web page as details become available.

## Where can I get information about water supply availability and quality?

- Up to date information on water availability and drought conditions is available at [www.manitoba.ca/drought](http://www.manitoba.ca/drought).
- The province has information on water supply capacity of most rivers and reservoirs. Contact [drought@gov.mb.ca](mailto:drought@gov.mb.ca) to ask about the status of a specific water source.
- The Water Branch can provide information on your current well (quality and quantity) if available, and what the expectations might be for constructing a new well. Email your contact information, the legal land location and the information you are looking for (existing well information or groundwater potential) to [Manitoba Groundwater: Drought](#). Feedback provided may include aquifer depths, potential pumping rate, and if available the water quality in the area. A listing of [Licensed Well Drilling Contractors](#) is also available.

## What do I need to know about accessing water for my business or municipality?

- Water use in Manitoba is licensed under The Water Rights Act. Water use licence applications are assessed individually, based on project design and withdrawal location. More information on the licensing processing is available at: [www.manitoba.ca/sd/water/water-rights/water-use/index.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/sd/water/water-rights/water-use/index.html). Questions related to water use licensing and permits can be directed to [wateruse@gov.mb.ca](mailto:wateruse@gov.mb.ca).
- Any water control work that restricts water or diverts, dams, or redirects flow is considered drainage under The Water Rights Act and requires permission. More information is available at: [www.manitoba.ca/sd/water/water-rights/drainage-and-water-control/](http://www.manitoba.ca/sd/water/water-rights/drainage-and-water-control/). If you have questions related to building dams or water control works licenses and registration, email [drainage@gov.mb.ca](mailto:drainage@gov.mb.ca).
- Environment Act Licences may be required for the following developments:
  - interbasin water transfers with diversion rates of no less than 0.5 cubic metres per second
  - works that result in modifications to lake or river levels and affect a water surface area of no less than 2 kilometres squared
  - withdrawals of water from any water body of no less than 200 decametres cubed (1 decametre cubed = 1,000 metres cubed or 1,000,000 litres)If you have any questions related to Environment Act Licensing, email [EABDirector@gov.mb.ca](mailto:EABDirector@gov.mb.ca).

## How can the provincial government help municipalities manage water resources?

- Municipalities can contact [drought@gov.mb.ca](mailto:drought@gov.mb.ca) to be connected to resources and support from across government. Municipalities should contact the province **before** they run out of water so that timely support can be provided. The province is actively supporting several water suppliers across the province to manage low water levels.
- The Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) remains focused on the consequence management aspects of drought emergencies. EMO can provide advice on when a state of emergency would be appropriate. Contact [emo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:emo@gov.mb.ca) or phone 1-888-267-8298 for additional information.
- The Municipal Services Officers at Manitoba Municipal Relations continue to provide advisory services to municipal officials on matters of local governance, administration, and operations. They can be contacted by phone at 204-945-2572 or by email at [mrmaas@gov.mb.ca](mailto:mrmaas@gov.mb.ca).