



# Drought Information Statement for Central and Southeast Illinois

Valid February 20, 2026

Issued By: WFO Lincoln, IL

Contact Information: [nws.lincoln@noaa.gov](mailto:nws.lincoln@noaa.gov)

- The next update will be around Thursday, February 26, if conditions persist or worsen.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/ilx/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates> for regional drought status updates.

## Key Messages:

- **Recent Precipitation:** Milder temperatures and a weekend system brought over 1 inch of rain to southern Illinois. However, the most severe drought areas (D2-D3) missed this rainfall almost entirely.
- **Worsening Dryness:** Central Illinois is experiencing an ongoing thaw, revealing worsening drought indicators such as declining 20-to-50-inch soil moisture, lowering water table levels, and reduced streamflow.



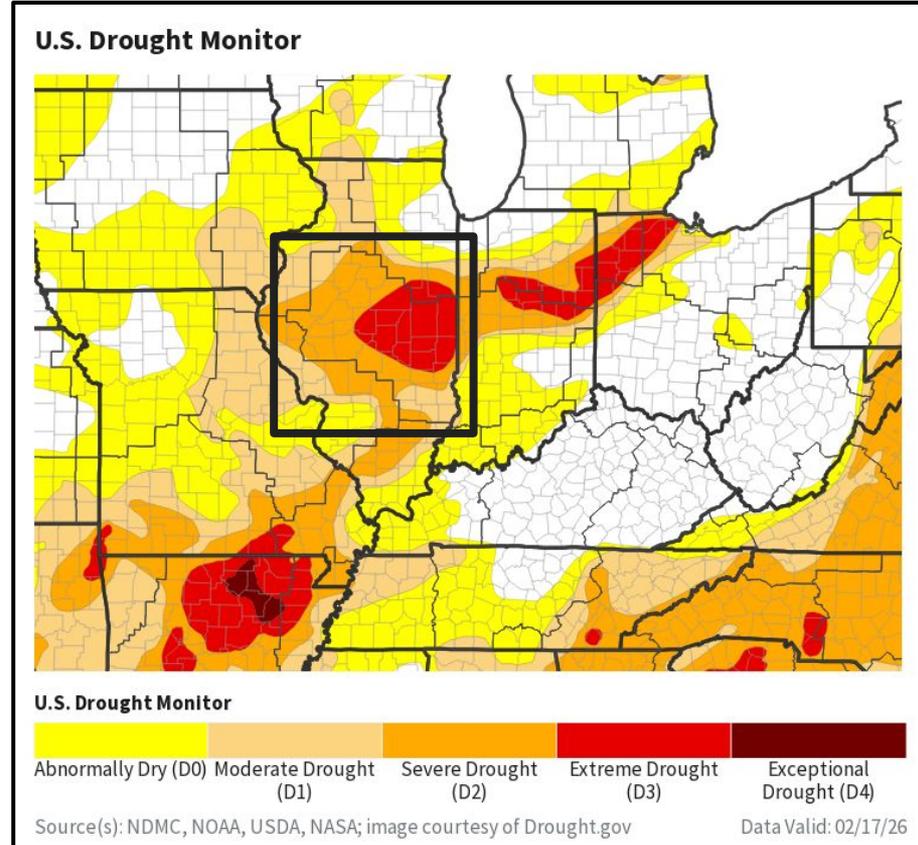


# U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for central and southeast Illinois

- **Drought Intensity and Extent:**

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** N/A
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** Portions of east-central Illinois including DeWitt, Macon, Piatt, Douglas, Moultrie, Coles, Edgar, Champaign, and Vermilion counties, and parts of McLean, Logan, Sangamon, Christian, and Clark counties.
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** An expanding area that encompasses much of the area.
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Parts of Knox, Stark, and counties south of I-70.
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** None



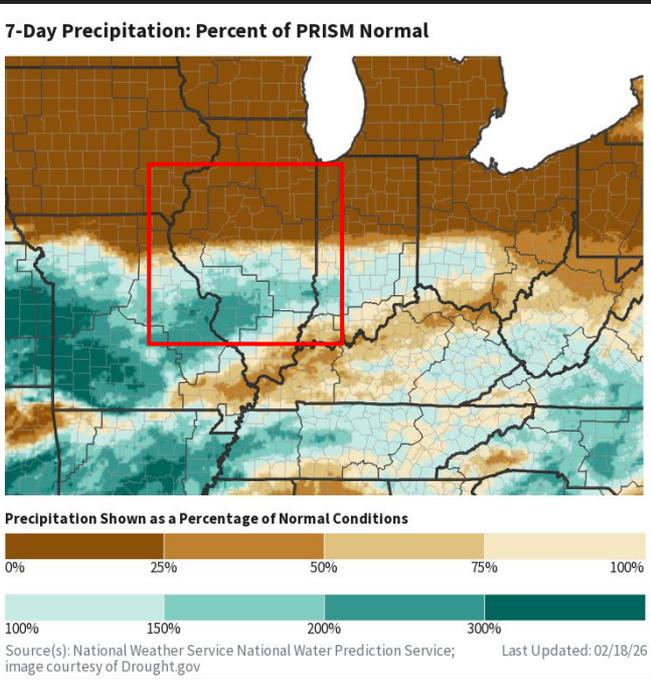
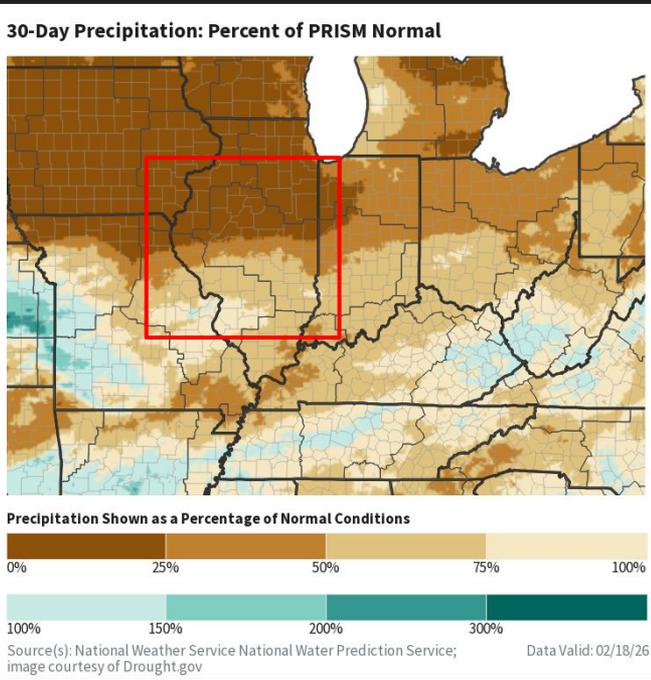


# Recent Precipitation

Last 7 days and 30 days

Over the past seven days (right), precipitation was minimal to non-existent in areas north of Interstate 72, while some points south received over an inch.

Looking at the last 30 days (left), most of the region was significantly drier than normal.



**Image Caption:** Total precipitation as a percentage of normal, as of February 18. Left image is a 30 day average, right image the last 7 days. Images from [Drought.gov](http://Drought.gov).



# Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

## Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflow is much below normal for most rivers in central parts of the state (less than 10 percent of normal).
- Near record low flow on the east end of the Sangamon River basin is impacting water supplies of Lake Decatur downstream.
- Lake Decatur is reported to be about 5 feet below normal. Lake Springfield is about 4 feet below normal.

## Agricultural Impacts

- No recent impacts reported in the past week.

## Fire Hazard Impacts

- None reported.

## Other Impacts

- Residents across Adams County report that natural water sources and creeks have dried up, ponds remain very low, and grazing stockpiles are quickly depleting. Both subsoil and topsoil moisture are severely lacking.
- The town of Sullivan declared a water emergency on February 11th due to ongoing drought and a reduced water supply. Restrictions on non-essential water use are in effect until March 1st, and residents are urged to conserve water.

## Mitigation Actions

- Voluntary Stage 1 water rationing is in effect in Decatur.
- Voluntary water conservation requested in Bloomington and Sullivan.

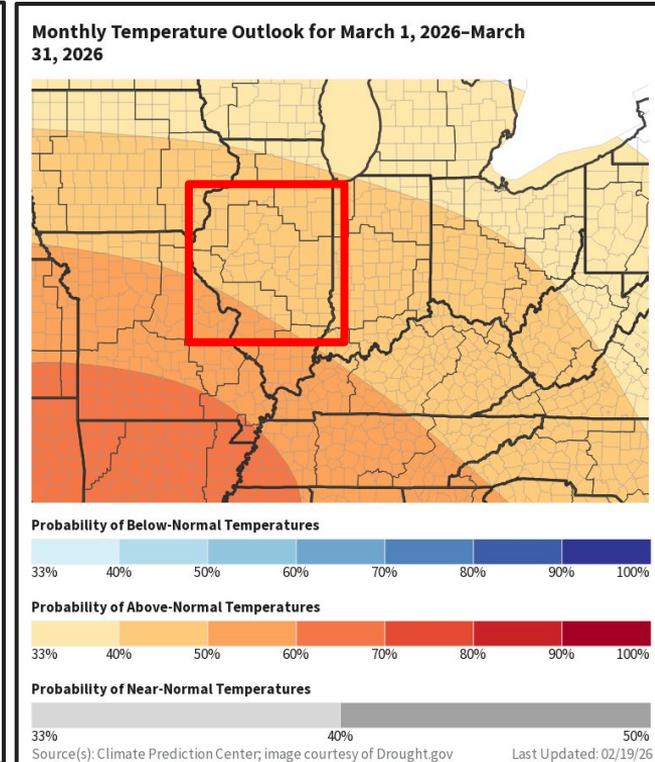
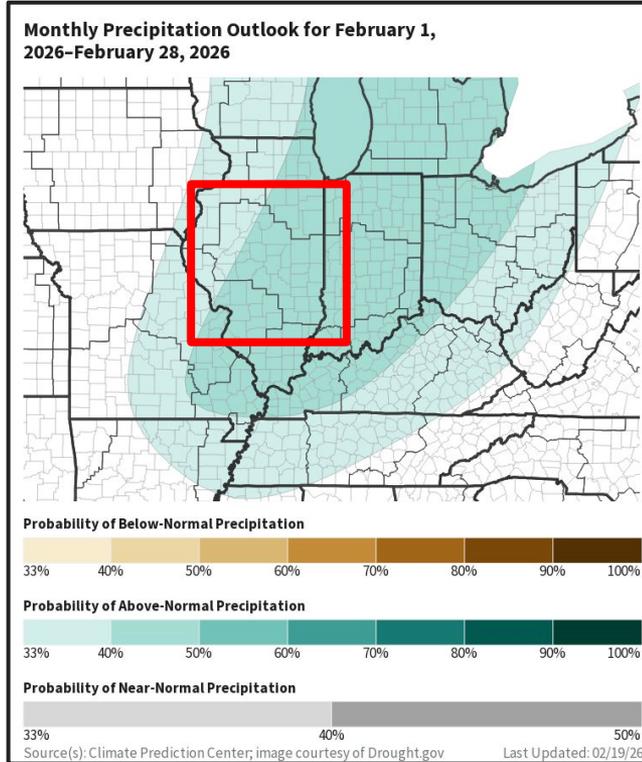




# Long Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- There are above normal chances for precipitation to close out the month.
- Above normal temperatures are favored (40% to 50% chance) across central IL for February.



**Image Caption:** Precipitation (left) and temperature (right) outlooks for February. Check [weather.gov/ilx](http://weather.gov/ilx) for updated forecasts.

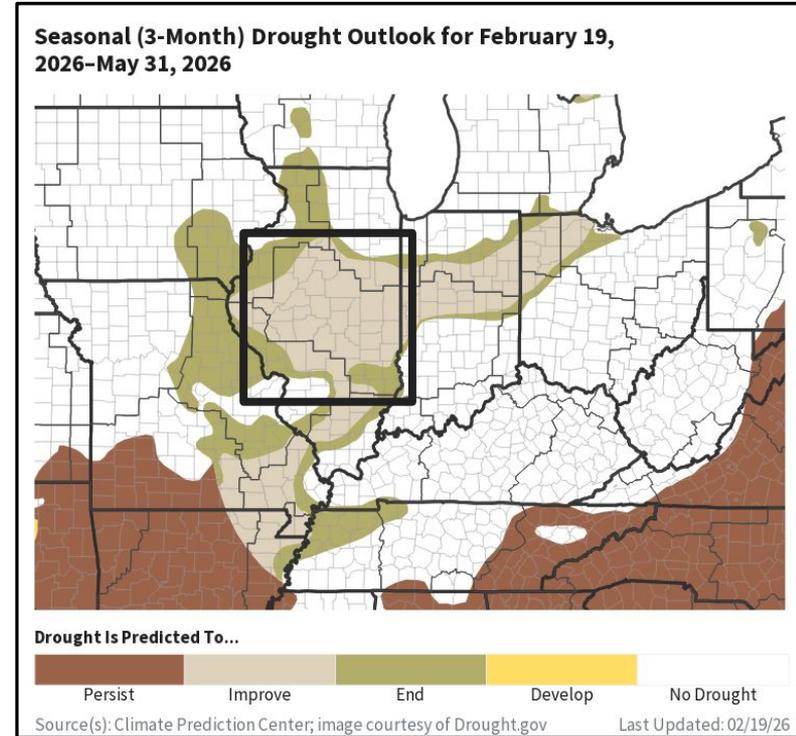




# Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Drought is forecast to improve across the area through the end of May.



**Image Caption:**

Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook released Feb 19, valid through May 31, 2026. Images from [Drought.gov](#).

Links to the latest:

- [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

