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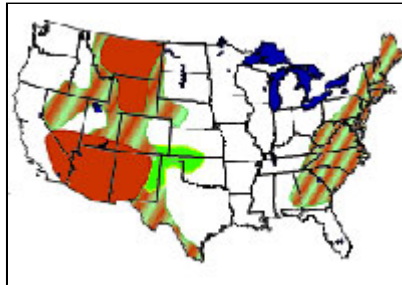
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East Coast Sees Little Relief from Drought

Water Supplies Plummet after Record Dry Winter

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Solid blocks of red mark areas of drought where water shortages are likely to continue into the summer. Red- and green-striped drought areas are expected to see some improvement. *Graphic: NOAA*
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March 28, 2002 -- This week in the nation's largest city, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg declared a drought emergency. Washing cars, watering lawns, and hosing down sidewalks will all be restricted. The city's reservoirs, which should be brimming at this time of year, are only half full.

"Our city is in the midst of the worst drought it has experienced in a decade," Bloomberg said in a speech earlier this week as he declared a stage-one drought

emergency.

"The likelihood, even if we have a lot of rain, is that we will still have our reservoirs at a dangerously low level. We urge everybody to please conserve as much as you possibly can," he told New York City residents.

New York's action is just the latest in a series of drought emergencies declared in cities and states along the East Coast. From Maine to Georgia, the driest fall and winter on record have depleted wells, reduced some rivers and streams to mere trickles, and sent reservoir levels plummeting.

Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening is considering declaring a state of drought emergency as its largest city, Baltimore, is forced to abandon its main reservoir for back-up sources. In Maine, wells have run dry for the first time in memory, and the state has been declared a federal disaster area because of the drought's impact on farmers. New Jersey's large population and thirsty industries have made the drought especially serious there.

Rain has fallen across much of the Atlantic Seaboard during the past few weeks, but above-normal rains will be needed for months to save the region from serious water shortages this summer.

For *All Things Considered*, guest host [John Ydstie](#) has the story.

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Other Resources

- Get a weekly update through the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#) Web site.
- Find out how much rain is needed and where at [NOAA's drought calculator](#).
- Get a state by state breakdown at [NOAA's Drought Information Center](#).
- Learn about the [different stages of drought and its economic and environmental impacts](#).
- Read the [Weekly Weather & Crop Bulletin](#), provided by NOAA and the U.S. departments of Commerce and Agriculture.
- Find an extensive list of conservation links at the [WaterWiser](#) Web site.
- Read the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's [weekly forecast of extreme weather threats](#).

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