

# Texans urged to complete US Census

Texas residents are encouraged to complete the U.S. Census.

“It’s really, really key to get an accurate count, because we only do it once every 10 years,” Stephen Buckner, assistant director of Communications at the U.S. Census Bureau, said. “If you’re not counted, it’s not just a one-year mistake, it’s a 10-year mistake.”

The census helps determine congressional and state legislative districts, and Texas is expected to pick up as many as three new congressional seats. Census results are also used to allocate funding for programs and services.

“The census is so important that our founding fathers actually put it right up on the top of the Constitution. We’ve been doing it since 1790,” Buckner said. “It’s about representation, but it’s also about money that comes back to state and local governments for key programs, public services like health clinics, schools, roads, food and farm assistance programs, even unemployment insurance. For rural America, it also means services for water and waste disposal, rural business development grants and rural housing preservation grants.”

Despite the COVID-19

pandemic interrupting the Census Bureau’s normal operations, response rates are on par with what they expected at this time, he said. The national response rate is currently around 60 percent.

In Texas, however, the response rate is just under 55 percent, according to data provided by the Census Bureau. Buckner noted it may be lower because some rural Texans have not yet received questionnaires.

“Texas is unique in that we have a lot of households that are more rural areas where we need to deliver questionnaire packages, because they either get their mail from a P.O. box or they don’t have a city-style address,” Buckner said. “That operation was halted back in the beginning of April because of the pandemic. We’re starting to resume those operations right now to deliver questionnaires across the state to about 327,000 households, so hopefully we’ll be able to deliver those packages soon.”

People will have a couple of months to respond to the mailed questionnaire before Census personnel start going door-to-door to count households in person, Buckner said.

There is a census ID for each household located on the questionnaire, which can be used to complete the census

**WHY PARTICIPATE IN THE 2020 CENSUS?**  
FEDERAL AND STATE DOLLARS ARE PROVIDED BASED ON CENSUS COUNTS THAT FUND:

- HOSPITALS
- PUBLIC BENEFIT PROGRAMS
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- ROADS
- HEALTH INSURANCE
- SCHOOLS
- AND MUCH MORE!

**EVERYONE COUNTS.**

**PARTICIPATION IS FAST AND EASY:**

- Return form
- 844-330-2020
- 2020Census.gov

online, by phone or by mail.

For those worried about exposure to the coronavirus from other individuals, Buckner said the best way to avoid a visit by a census-taker is to fill out the census after receiving the questionnaire.

Locally-hired census employees will begin canvassing neighborhoods later in the summer in as safe a manner as possible, he added.

“Those activities will begin in mid-August,” he said. “We are going to have to hire about 500,000 workers nationwide to follow up with households that don’t respond. Anybody that’s

coming to work for the Census Bureau is going through the CDC guideline trainings to make sure they know how to interact with the public in a safe way. Every census worker will be issued a mask, gloves and hand sanitizer to conduct their work and activities.”

Completing the census takes about five minutes.

Buckner noted the Census Bureau has conducted research in recent years on making the questionnaire simple and easy to understand, as well as finding the best way to reach rural populations. He urged people to respond as soon as possible to

help ensure their community is represented fairly in the future.

“While everybody’s still practicing social distancing, this is something that you could do from the comfort and safety of your home,” he said. “It makes a really big difference in Texas and across your local communities to respond either online at 2020census.gov, by phone or by mail. As soon as you get those questionnaire packets, you’ll have a census ID. Go ahead and respond and make a difference in your community for the next 10 years.”

For more information, visit <https://2020census.gov>

# Farm Bureau solicits AgLead participants

Texas Farm Bureau (TFB) is now accepting applications for its AgLead program.

Strong agricultural leadership doesn’t only happen in the field. It happens beyond the fencerow - in local and state organizations, court rooms and Congress, said Coke County Farm Bureau President John Ross Copeland.

Figuring out where to develop those leadership skills can be difficult.

“Texas Farm Bureau’s leadership program - AgLead - can help grow our future leaders,” John Ross said. “The program helps farmers and ranchers develop the skills to lead Texas communities and agriculture.”

A maximum of 20 participants will be selected for the program - 10 participants between the ages of 25-40 as of Dec. 31, 2020 and 10 participants age 40 and older as of Dec. 31, 2020.

The two-year program takes participants across Texas, the country and the world to discover agriculture and leadership from a new perspective. AgLead members develop a variety of skills and knowledge regarding leadership, communication, public policy, regulatory issues, advocacy and more.

“Discovering new innovative agricultural techniques and discussing agricultural policy with elected officials at the state and national levels is just part of the program,” John Ross said. “From leadership to

communication and public policy to regulatory advocacy, program participants get to see just how the decisions made elsewhere can affect our lives.”

John Ross noted it’s essential to develop young and experienced leaders for the future of agriculture and encourages those with an interest in agricultural leadership to apply for the program.

Applications for AgLead XV are available online. To review and download an application, visit [texasfarmbureau.org/aglead](http://texasfarmbureau.org/aglead).

Applications and supporting documents must be submitted by November 1.

For more information, email Jamie Gipe, TFB director of Membership and Special Projects, at [jgipe@txfb.org](mailto:jgipe@txfb.org) or call 254-751-8703.

## ...Summer Pet Safety

*(Continued from previous page)*  
Rutter also reminds pet owners that it is dangerous to leave a pet inside a parked car during any time of the year, but especially during the summer; in as little as 15 minutes, the inside of a car can become lethally hot.

The best way to avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke is to be aware of the amount of time a pet spends outside in the summer and to watch for any symptoms of these conditions. With these simple precautions, pet owners can ensure that their dogs and cats stay safe during the worst of summer.

# Water Weekly

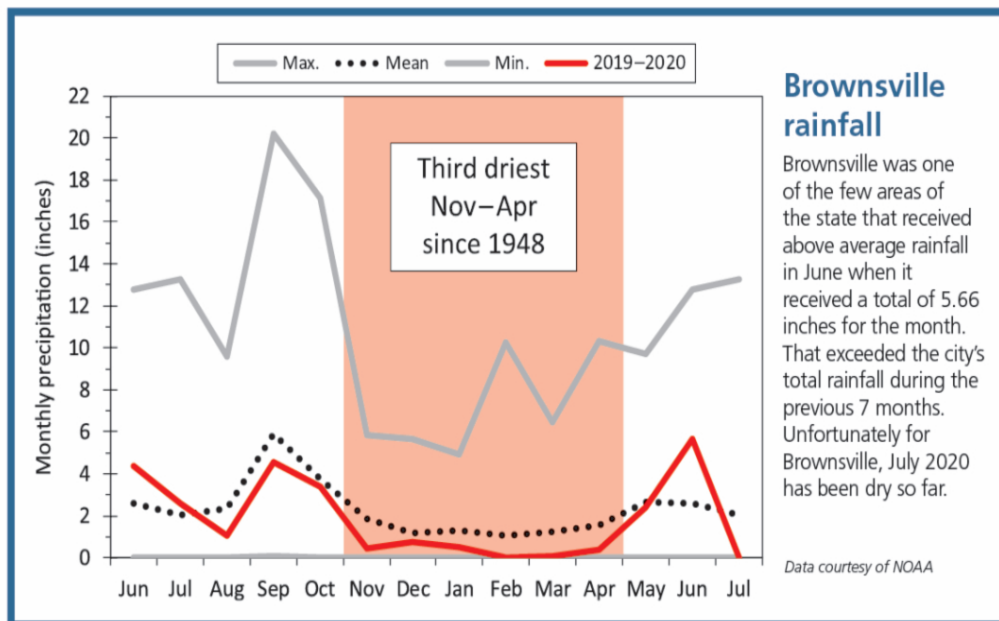
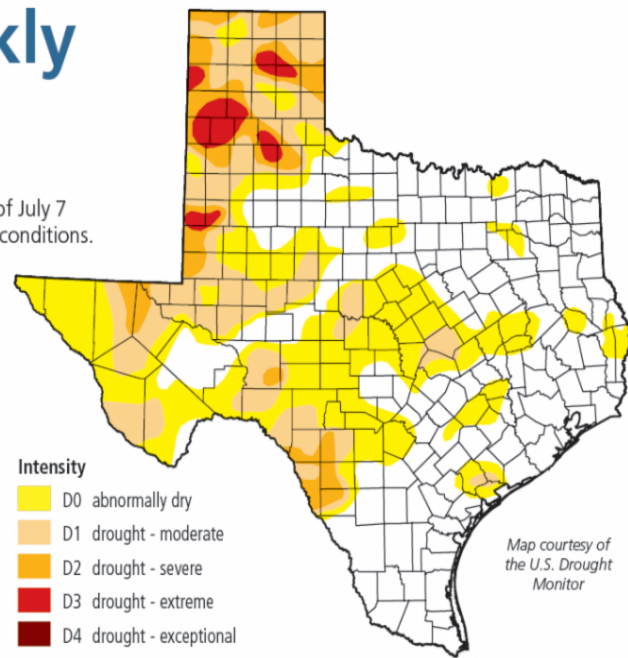
For the week of 07/13/20

## Water conditions

The latest drought map for conditions as of July 7 shows a mix of improving and worsening conditions. In the first week of July, areas south of San Angelo and east of Corsicana received significant rainfall. Areas south of Austin and San Antonio received almost no rainfall.

## Drought conditions

- 25% now
- 28% a week ago
- 19% three months ago
- 1% a year ago



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