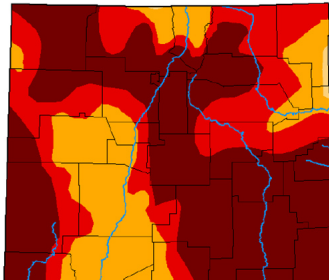


## Break out the sparklers!

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 22 April 2022 06:39

### U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico



**March 23, 2021**  
(Released Thursday, Mar. 25, 2021)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

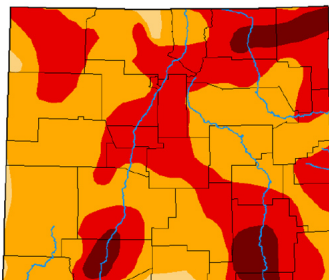
	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.68	80.21	53.38
Last Week (3-16-2021)	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.91	81.66	50.39
3 Months Ago (12-22-2020)	0.00	100.00	99.97	99.59	82.26	53.23
Start of Calendar Year (1-1-2021)	0.00	100.00	99.97	99.59	82.26	53.23
Start of Water Year (10-1-2020)	0.00	100.00	99.92	79.65	35.86	2.95
One Year Ago (03-24-2020)	25.74	44.25	26.30	11.40	0.00	0.00

**Intensity:**  
None D0 Abnormally Dry D1 Moderate Drought D2 Severe Drought D3 Extreme Drought D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

## Drought Monitor – New Mexico March 22, 2022

### U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico



**March 22, 2022**  
(Released Thursday, Mar. 24, 2022)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.06	99.94	98.91	91.19	39.64	5.53
Last Week (03-15-2022)	0.00	100.00	98.92	91.20	38.57	3.85
3 Months Ago (12-22-2021)	0.00	100.00	97.91	85.91	22.94	0.96
Start of Calendar Year (01-01-2022)	0.00	100.00	97.83	75.86	20.91	0.00
Start of Water Year (10-01-2021)	19.70	89.33	79.47	49.33	19.12	0.00
One Year Ago (03-23-2021)	0.00	100.00	100.00	96.68	80.21	53.38

**Intensity:**  
None D0 Abnormally Dry D1 Moderate Drought D2 Severe Drought D3 Extreme Drought D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

## Improved drought conditions lead to lift on firework ban

Fireworks are making a comeback to McKinley County for Cinco de Mayo this year.

McKinley County saw severe drought conditions in 2021. The U.S. Drought Monitor is released by the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

As of April 1, 2021, it showed McKinley County in the D3 and D4 intensity zones.

## Break out the sparklers!

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These intensity zones show areas where fire damage is extreme, irrigation allotments are decreased, vegetation and native trees are dying, federal lands are closed for fire precautions, burn bans are increased, and large rivers like the Rio Grande are dry.

Because of these conditions, McKinley County Fire Chief Brian Archuleta encouraged the county commissioners to ban the sale of certain fireworks for Cinco de Mayo 2021 and, eventually, the Fourth of July.

But now, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, conditions have improved. As of March 22, the county is in the D3 and D2 intensity zones.

“We’re probably mostly in the severe [D2 zone] and 30% in the extreme [D3 zone], which is in the northern part of McKinley County, and that’s more of our dry area; [it’s] not heavily populated,” Archuleta said in an interview on April 8. “That’s kind of why we didn’t do the ban for Cinco de Mayo, and we’re keeping an eye on it for Fourth of July.”

Archuleta said that last year 60% of the county was in the D3 zone, and 40% of it was in the D4 zone, or the severe zone, which is the highest level at which the Drought Monitor measures.

So with this improvement, Archuleta told the McKinley County Commissioners during their April 5 meeting that it would be safe to allow fireworks for Cinco de Mayo this year.

Last year, certain fireworks were banned during the holiday. County attorney Doug Decker explained to the commissioners which fireworks were a part of the ban during the April 6, 2021 County Commissioners meeting.

“The ones we can ban are those that go up in the air and those that make a louder bang,” Decker explained. “The common fireworks that are like your sparklers and your fountain cones and the smaller fireworks that don’t go very high and don’t make as loud a bang as others, the state won’t allow us to ban those.”

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This year though, all legal fireworks are fair game.

Archuleta said the county fire department is working with firework vendors to ensure everyone is on the same page.

“We’re giving firework vendors an opportunity to come and talk to us on their concerns because it affects their business,” Archuleta said. “So we try to work with the firework vendors to be as open as possible while being safe.”

Firework sales for Cinco De Mayo start on May 4 and end on May 6.

No decisions about the Fourth of July have been made yet. Archuleta said he would be coming back to the commissioners in June to make that decision. He said he would be monitoring the situation until then.

By Molly Ann Howell  
Sun Correspondent